

FROM THE DESK OF **SAMUEL BYCK**

MAR 24 2005

EDMONTON'S 100% INDEPENDENT NEWS & ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

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VUEWEEKLY

No. 492 / MAR 24 - MAR 30, 2005

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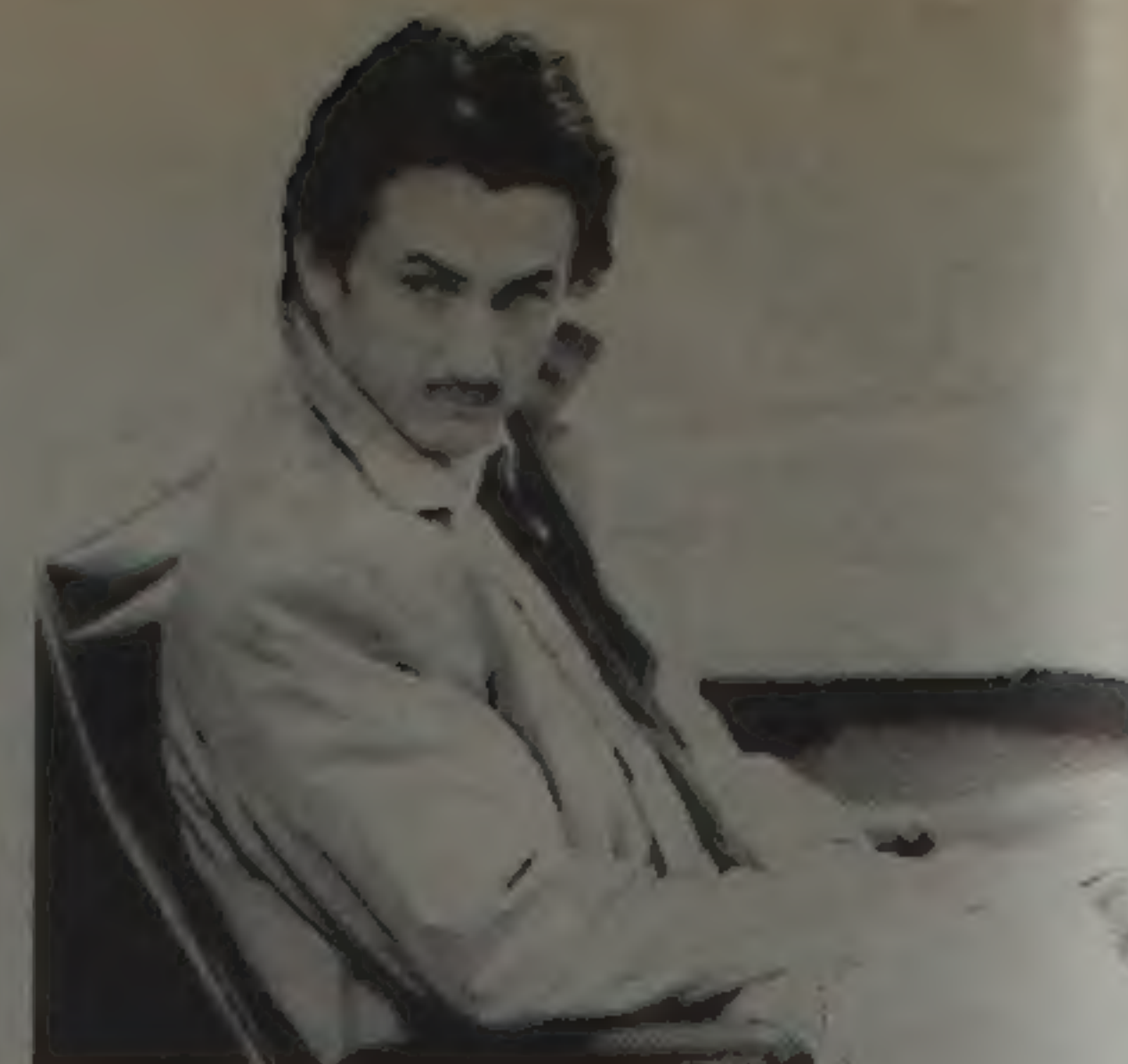
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ON THE COVER

Presidential assassins tend to be a pretty marginal, alienated bunch, but Samuel Byck was even more marginal than most: few people today even recall his pathetic, failed attempt to kill Richard Nixon by flying a plane into the White House. (When Stephen Sondheim wrote his musical *Assassins*, Byck was the one character who didn't even get a song!) But with *The Assassination of Richard Nixon*, director Niels Mueller gives Byck his moment in the spotlight • 33



FRONT

The affair of the necklaces: *Made in China* doc gets the dirt on Mardi Gras trinkets • 5



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The great white north

Multiple studies show that racial profiling is alive and well in multicultural Canada

BY MINISTER FAUST

Despite the distinctly Canadian tendency to see ourselves as self-abasing and polite to a fault, there's an ugly self-righteousness in our culture—too often we are forced an undernourishing patriotic diet of Yank-bashing, most visibly embodied by the likes of Rick Mercer, whose fame is largely based on televised antics to make Americans look stupid, and Molson's "I am Canadian" ads, an entire advertising

campaign based on our alleged superiority to our southern neighbours.

That very arrogance serves as cover for a vicious fact about Canada in 2005: racist attitudes are still prevalent in our society, and racial profiling across Canadian life is both widespread and destructive. According to an Ipsos-Reid poll published in time for March 21, the United Nations Day for the Elimination of

FEATURE

Racial Discrimination, nearly one in six Canadian adults—around four million people—have been victims of racism. And one in 10 Canucks wouldn't want someone from another race living next door.

Charlene Hay, executive director of the Northern Alberta Alliance on

Race Relations (NAARR) for the last eight years, isn't surprised. "Most of us would not come out and use a racial slur or say a racist joke in public, but the prejudices we have are very subtle and often we're not aware of them," she says. "This poll gets down to what people really think of people who are of another colour—and when I say 'people,' I'm talking mainly of white, mainstream Canadians, although there probably are in this one in 10 people who are, say, from India, who wouldn't want to live next door to somebody from Africa."

As well, both B'nai Brith and the Canadian branch of the Council on American-Islamic Relations report an increase in bigoted attacks against members of their community, from intimidation and property damage to

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BY RICHARD BURNETT

The pink Mafia

You hear it all the time from straights who think gay folks bend over backwards to help each other out: "Oh yeah, that dyke, or that fag, they got that position or gig because the person who hired them is gay."

But how is that any different from anybody else? I just wish the gay community did it better and more often.

I've long said we should model ourselves on Montreal's extraordinary Jewish community—today, after Israel and New York City, home to the largest Holocaust-survivor community in the world. For generations, Montreal Jews have recycled their resources to build a spectacularly strong, vibrant and supportive community that reaches across Canada. The world may hate you, but at

least you can get a decent shot at life with a little help from your friends.

Which is why networking—especially gay networking—is so important. Which brings me to an upcoming networking event for queer scholars and businesspeople at McGill University. Co-hosted by the Quebec Gay Chamber of Commerce, the McGill Queer Grad Caucus and the Concordia Queer Union, Networking First @ McGill is just one example of a golden opportunity to press flesh with potential employers and develop a wealth of (gay) contacts that may prove useful in the future.

"Eighty per cent of jobs are found through the hidden job market—the other 20 are found in newspapers and on the internet—and you can only tap into that by networking," explains McGill Career and Placement Service director Gregg Blachford. "Some people think this is taking advantage of people and so are reluctant to do it. They think it's nepotism. But it's not. It's [about] building a reputation and

trust among an ever-expanding circle of contacts. It is collaborative and reciprocal because they will need your help one day too."

Gay folks, because of historical workplace discrimination, look out for each other. "I think every identity—whether it's race, sex, age, what school you went to or whether you're gay—these are factors you can connect with," Blachford says. "So I can connect with someone who is gay because I'm gay and that gives us something else we can talk about."

That's a far cry from the days when being out could cost you your job. But that very threat is what unwittingly forced gays to build supportive communities. Now if we could only get Canada's gay high-rollers to follow the lead of openly gay American philanthropist Tim Gill and showbiz mogul David Geffen and donate wads of cash to help build national organizations and community centres across Canada.

Because, at the end of the day, you can network all you want, but it means nothing if you don't recycle.

Hasta la vista, baby: After my August 2004 interview with anti-gay reggae dancehall star Sizzla made national headlines and newscasts last summer—and then got me vilified in the pages of Jamaica's national newspaper of

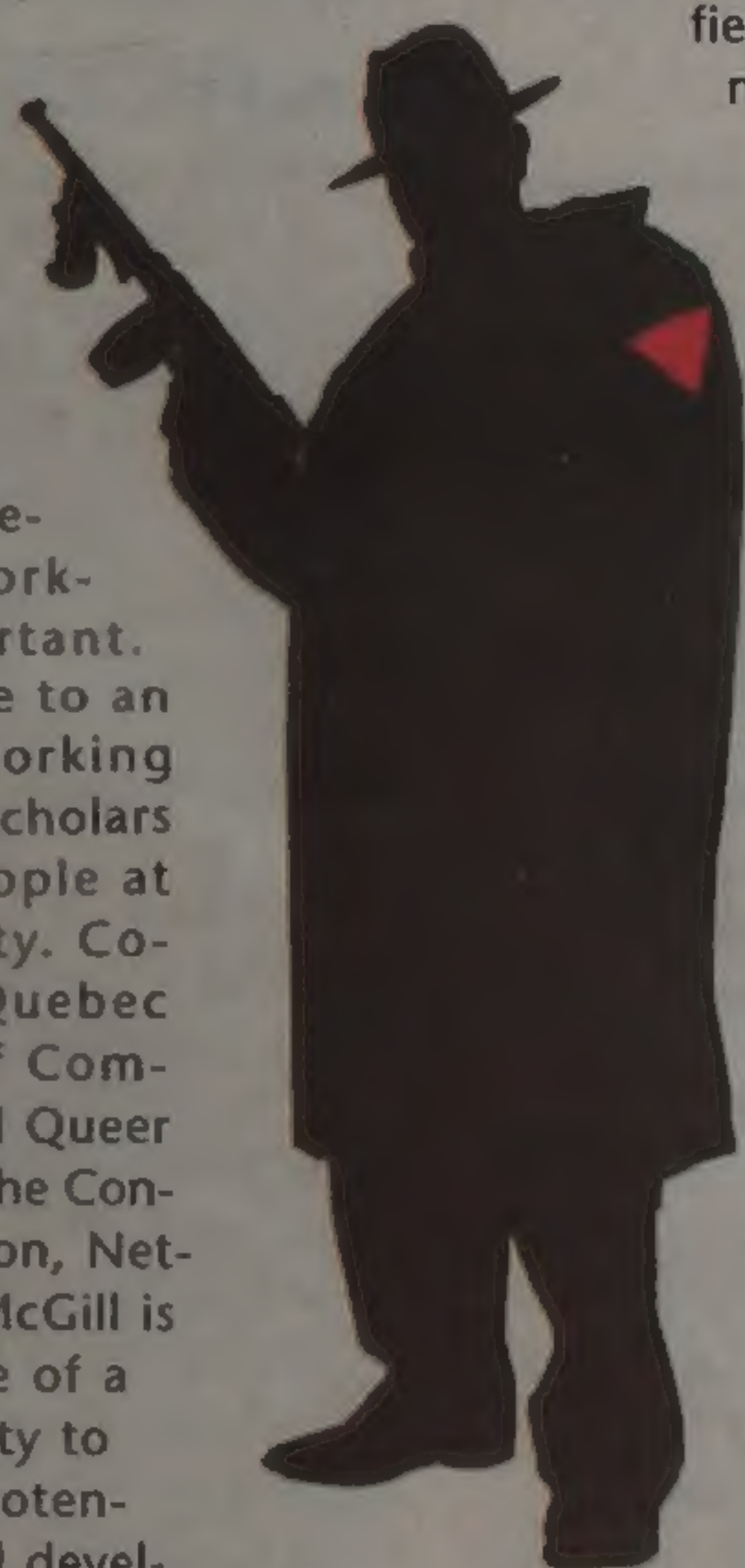
record, the *Gleaner*—it was no surprise to hear Sizzla's current hit song "Nah Apologize." Clearly aimed at folks like British gay activist Peter Tatchell and myself, the incendiary, gruff-voiced toaster repeats in the chorus, "Rastaman nah apologize to no batty bwoy."

So I am delighted to report that Jamaican security forces raided Sizzla's Judgement Yard premises in the rough August Town neighbourhood of Kingston on March 17, seizing a cache of illegal firearms including six AK-47 rifles, three sniper rifles, one M-16 rifle with a fitted silencer, two shotguns, one

Intratec-Nine submachine gun, 58 assorted rounds of ammunition, 11 magazines, two bulletproof vests and two AK-47 butt stocks.

After Sizzla and 32 others were detained by police, Jamaican National Security Minister Peter Phillips announced, "We are at war [with criminal gangs]."

"Nah Apologize" may very well be the last we hear from Sizzla. Jah Rastafari! ☺



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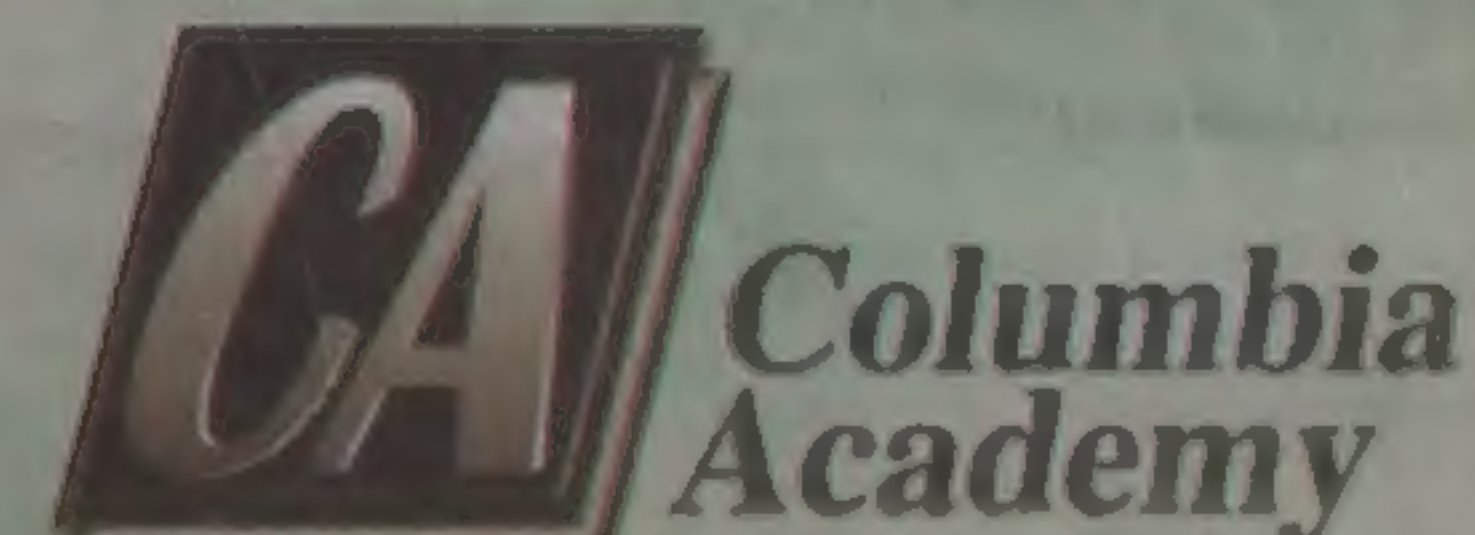
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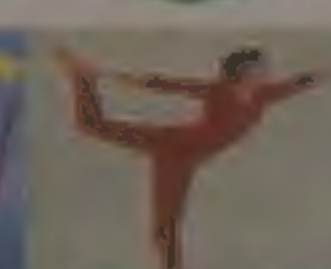
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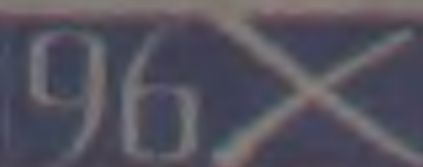
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10303-108 St.
Edmonton, AB T5J 1L7
Tel: (780) 426-1996
Fax: (780) 426-2889
e-mail: <office@vueweekly.com>
website: www.vueweekly.com

Issue Number 492

March 24-30, 2005

available at over 1,400 locations

Editor/Publisher

Ron Garth

<ron@vueweekly.com>

Editorial Directors

Chris Boutet (News Editor)

(Acting Music Editor)

<chris@vueweekly.com>

Paul Matwychuk (Managing Editor)

<paul@vueweekly.com>

Wayne Arthurson (Special Features Editor)

<autarky@telusplanet.net>

Production Manager

Lyle Bell

<lyle@vueweekly.com>

Listings

Glenys Switzer

<glenys@vueweekly.com>

Layout Manager

Sean Rivalin

<sean@vueweekly.com>

Sales and Marketing Manager

Rob Lightfoot

<rob@vueweekly.com>

Classifieds Sales

Carol Robinson

Distribution & Promotions

Representative

Christine Yanish

<christine@vueweekly.com>

Local Advertising

Call 426-1996

National Advertising

DPS Media (416) 413-9291

Contributors

Colleen Addison, David Berry, Josef Braun, Rob Breznay, Richard Burnett, Colin Cathrea, Leah Collins, Phil Duperron, Minister Faust, Brian Gibson, James Grisdal, Iain Ilich, Graham Johnson, Mike Larocque, Lachlan Mackintosh, Agnieszka Matejko, Ross Moroz, Eden Munro, Andrea Nemerson, Stephen Notley, T.B. Player, James Radke, Steven Sandor, Emma Sasse, Adam Smith, David Stone, Christopher Thrall, Christopher Wiebe, Darren Zenko

Cover Illustration

Graham Johnson

Production Assistant

Michael Slek

Administrative Assistant

Jasmine Politeski

Printing and Film Assembly

The Edmonton Sun

Distribution

Marty Anderson, Alan Ching,

Derek Mohammed, Bob Riley,

Wally Yanish, Clark Distribution

Vue Weekly is available free of charge at well over 1,400 locations throughout Edmonton. We are funded solely through the support of our advertisers. Vue Weekly is a division of 783783 Alberta Ltd. and is published every Thursday.

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Canada Post Canadian Publications Ltd.
Publications Mail Agreement No. 40022989

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news
roundup

BY CHRIS BOUTET

MARTIN: SHIFTY?

Just before leaving to meet with his American and Mexican counterparts regarding some potential changes to the North American Free Trade Agreement, Prime Minister Paul Martin was taken to task on the floor of the House on Tuesday by NDP Leader Jack Layton, who accused Martin of planning to exact some fiendishly disguised pro-American agenda.

While Martin has said he plans to discuss the elimination of "nuisance tariffs" among the three partners and the possibility of "harmonizing" some continental business regulations, opposition members suspect that Martin's Liberals are seeking a worrisome degree of integration into the American economy. According to reports from the *Globe and Mail*, Layton charged that the talks would produce a "fortress George Bush bolstered by cheap Mexican labour and lots and lots of Canadian oil."

Martin, however, dismissed Layton's claims of a hidden agenda, saying that Ottawa has an overt agenda of cooperation with Washington and Mexico City that is geared towards security, prosperity and a higher quality of life. But still, some are wary, especially in light of a Canadian/Mexican task-force report released last week which recommended building a North American economic and security community by 2010 and proposed the creation of a common external tariff and an outer security perimeter. Martin played down the

report, saying the ideas put forth would not be on the meeting's agenda, although late reports indicate that he followed this reassurance up with a disconcerting display of hand-wringing and mustache-twirling, interspersed with peals of diabolical laughter.

VIGILANTISM: EFFECTIVE?

As anybody who knows anything will tell you if you nag them enough, marijuana is really, really bad—though marijuana would cease to be bad if we could track down all the grow ops in Canada and put them out of commission... but to do so would take vast amounts of manpower that local and national law enforcement just don't have. And therein lies the dilemma that has plagued man since the dawn of time—until Tuesday, that is, when it was brought to the Toronto media's attention that two local politicians have decided that if the cops aren't willing to track down the city's grow ops, they are... *vigilante style*.

Oh, I'm not kidding here—according to the *National Post*, even as we speak, Scarborough-Agincourt MP Jim Karygiannis and city councilor Mike Del Grande are going door-to-door in a shady eastern Toronto neighbourhood, in the hopes of locating marijuana grow-houses. Although their methodology was not disclosed, one can only assume it involves peering through a lot of living-room windows, grabbing people by the lapels when they answer the door and screaming, "QUIT GROWING DRUGS, YOU STUPID HIPPIES!"

Not surprisingly, Toronto police are more than a little concerned by the Karygiannis and Del Grande's uniquely ineffective blend of misguided political grandstanding and vigilante justice. Karygiannis has taken exception to the assertion that what he and his colleague are doing was vigilantism, saying his "hands-on crusade" is instead

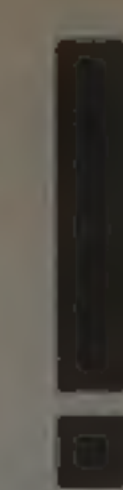
meant to raise awareness and empower people to take back their neighbourhoods. Superintendent Warr suggested that the two politicians stick to law-making and leave the enforcement to police.

MINORITIES: REALLY SCARY?

Well, it turns out all those hardline anti-immigration right-wingers were right: thanks to our country's bizarre dedication to an open immigration policy and general unwillingness to stand at the border and scare non-Europeans away by firing shotguns into the air, more than half the populations of Toronto and Vancouver are going to be overrun with—gasp!—*non-white people* by 2017, according to a Statistics Canada report released Tuesday.

According to reports from the CBC, the study, commissioned to portray the cultural diversity of Canada's population by the 150th anniversary of Confederation, projects that by 2017, the vast majority of non-Europeans in Canada will live in Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal, and comprise roughly 20 per cent of the overall population. According to data from censuses taken between 1996 to 2001 the visible minority population grew at a rate of 25 per cent during that period, six times faster than the total population.

While a few cultural pundits (or "jerks") have expressed concern with the findings of the study, Jeffrey Reitz, head of the ethnic studies program at the University of Toronto, dismissed such moanings in an interview with the *Globe and Mail*. "At each phase, people have expressed concern that increasing diversity was changing Canadian identity and producing potentially disruptive consequences and yet here we are," he said. "And so you could say that this is just more of the same, and in fact that the Canadian identity can't be changed by increasing diversity because that's what the Canadian identity is." ☺



vuepoint

By EMMA SASSE

The big red one

Canadian foreign policy is a matter of exclusive federal jurisdiction, but Ottawa had some bellicose company this week in Washington. And if nothing else, Premier Ralph Klein's visit to Capitol Hill underscored the balls-out hypocrisy Alberta's Tories practice with impunity: if Ottawa comes near their natural resources, there's blood all over the place—but Calgary's cowboys have no problem tracking mud into Canadian foreign policy, especially when the shit they're tracking in is steeped in imperialist domination and slavish devotion to the dogs of war.

In Wednesday's *Globe and Mail*, Klein expressed Alberta's support for missile defence and oil drilling in the Alaskan wildlife refuge, and bubbled over with girlish glee that Paul Cellucci, former American ambassador to Canada, counted Alberta as a "red province"—meaning we're to be counted among the Republican faithful as a result of Alberta's support of the war in Iraq. Never mind that none of this is Klein's damn business—foreign policy is and has always been Ottawa's problem, according to a little thing called the Constitution. But law of the land be damned: we'll say anything and stomp on any delicate diplomatic relations to show that Alberta is not fettered by any such democratic silliness.

Klein's subservience makes all Albertans look like sycophants and yes-men, and that's embarrassing for the sane among us, to be sure. But it's more than just face-saving or some ratty old Constitution that's at stake here; the Alberta government is not supporting a grassroots bunch of farmers who have launched a NAFTA challenge on getting the border open to live Canadian cattle—preferring a quieter, and (as Agriculture Minister Doug Horner said last week in question period), more cooperative approach. Klein's Tories are also more than happy to support Bush's vision for a continental energy policy (read: Alberta gives and the U.S. takes). For Albertans, that means we continue to ship natural gas south at a breakneck pace even as our reserves dwindle and Canadian emergency supplies take a back seat to Arizonans blasting their air conditioners.

Can Albertans expect any different when the door finally hits Klein in the ass on his way out? The heir apparent to the parochial premiership is Jim Dinning, a corporate superstar who just sat on the trilateral commission that recommended closer, deeper integration with the United States. Unless Albertans finally pull their heads out and turf the Tories, we can expect to be slaves to the Empire for years to come. ☹

Beads of sweatshops

New Orleans trinkets are traced back to their tragic source in David Redmon's *Mardi Gras: Made in China*

BY CHRISTOPHER THRALL

A matronly woman dressed like a Vegas showgirl leers suggestively into the camera. Years of celebration are deeply etched into the painted features beneath her dyed red hair. "You'll sell your soul at Mardi Gras for a strand of beads," she laughs, fingering the plastic finery draped around her neck. This is the final scene of David Redmon's documentary *Mardi Gras: Made in China*, screening at the Anarchist Book Fair this Friday (March 25), and its impact is staggering.

This exquisite final line is the culmination of an exposé of the migrant Chinese labourers who assemble the trinkets for sale at New Orleans' annual bacchanal. Mostly women under 20 who earn up to \$1.20 (U.S.) a day, the workers' stories contrast sharply with those of the factory owner who makes \$2 million per year, the importer who makes up to \$25 million per year and the young Americans who couldn't care less where their celebration's accessories come from. *Mardi Gras: Made in China* forces viewers to reconsider a renegade capitalist system that seeks the lowest price regardless of human cost.

The result of five years' work for David Redmon, the documentary, which was an official selection at this year's Sundance Festival, evolved from subjects he explored in his Masters and Ph.D. dissertations. Redmon bought his first video camera four weeks before his first visit to the Tai Kuen Bead Factory in Fuzhou, China; he had no idea what to expect when he arrived. Through his interviews, Redmon realized that he had touched upon a story that needed telling, so he returned a few months after being kicked out of the country for filming without a license. His second visit expanded on the personal

stories of the factory workers and included a labourer's visit home for the Chinese New Year celebration, as well as frank discussions with the factory owner, Roger Wong.

"That Roger was quite a character," says Redmon, his youthful voice echoing with laughter over the phone. "I think he assumed I was there to make a promotional video about his factory that I would show to American businesses." The preconception is a relief: otherwise, Wong's gleeful focus on strict discipline, drastic punishment and fines for the slightest infraction paint him as an absurd ogre. Wong is proud of his working conditions and high production targets, even boasting that he uses 95 per cent female labour because they are easier to control. In fact, Wong is so positive and affable that the viewer ends up wondering if the factory could possibly be as bad as the workers claim. And they have a lot to claim.

RUNNING 24 HOURS A DAY, many of the machines lack even the simplest safety features. Shifts are a minimum of 12 hours (and usually average 15 or 16). The factory produces nearly 8,000 pounds of beads every day, and if a worker doesn't meet her quota, her pay is cut. She is fined for talking during work hours and docked a month's pay for having a male visitor in the 20-by-24-foot dorm room she shares with nine other women. Workers can only leave the barbed-wire-enclosed compound on Sundays, and only if they are not required to work.

Redmon says that it took a while to get the workers to open up to him. "I could only interview people on their days off," he reveals, "and we would have to go to an isolated area of the compound." Slowly, after

days of talking through interpreters, the women started to reveal the real conditions at the factory. Each one extracted a promise from Redmon, however: "They were terrified. They said that Roger [Wong] had warned them I was coming and not to say anything bad. Each one begged me not to show the footage to Roger, not to show anyone until after they had left the factory."

During the interviews, Redmon talks to a dispirited 18-year-old woman with no plans for her future besides helping her younger brother

PREVIEW DOCUMENTARY

go to school; a 14-year-old girl who never meets her quota is paid less than \$1 a day to paint ceramic Mardi Gras masks that sell for up to \$20 each on the streets of New Orleans. Somewhat unexpectedly, the documentary shows the workers coping. Dancing together, playing cards and learning English in the few hours they have to themselves, the workers demonstrate a stunning ability to adjust to conditions that were eliminated from Western society so long ago. While yearning for their families, the girls remember home life as boring and oppressive. At the factory, they are able to relieve their parents of a financial burden and even send money home while gaining experiences and freedom they never would have enjoyed otherwise.

The film highlights a jagged contrast between the Chinese factory workers and the partiers at Mardi Gras. The products of their bone-wearying labour are bought 12 strands for a dollar or caught from one of the passing floats, then bartered for flashes of tit-flesh or deep kisses from inebriated women. The

tradition started in 1978, and on the streets of New Orleans, there are an estimated 1,000 exposures every three minutes. "It makes me horny," claims one reveler. Her friend agrees: "Yeah—all that attention is on you!"

THE FUNNIEST PART of the documentary, though the comedy remains black, comes when the factory workers are shown pictures of street scenes from Mardi Gras. "You mean people expose themselves for the beads we make?" one girl asks, almost collapsing with laughter. "They must love them very much." Another factory worker is more pensive. "On us these beads are very ugly," she whispers, "but on these Americans, they look very beautiful." The difference is seen as cultural: Chinese girls would be ashamed to show their bodies in such a way, especially in exchange for such cheap plastic beads.

Back on the streets of New Orleans, the last thing anybody wants to hear about is the medieval conditions of the beads' origins. During the carnival, Redmon attracted attention by projecting interviews with the workers onto the walls of the French Quarter. "Don't bring my conscience into this!" pleaded a partier from New York as he walked away to barter his beads. "Ten cents an hour, for them, is a lot of money," said one MBA grad from the University of Florida, alleviating his guilt. (The mean income in Fuzhou actually falls around 60 cents an hour for an eight-hour day.) The brief twinges of conscience Redmon presents fade quickly, however, and not a single interviewee gave up their beads.

According to Redmon, the original intent for the film was to convey globalization from the perspective of the invisible workers. "At the time I

began the project, documentaries on globalization only showed talking heads who said how good it was," Redmon explains. "I wanted to show and tell the other story." He feels that he has met this goal, but the results have far surpassed anything he had ever dreamed.

"About two years ago," Redmon remembers, "I was working, paying for everything, showing rough cuts of the film to anybody who would watch. Anything I made went into translating more of the interviews. I sold a copy for \$20 to a couple who couldn't make it to that night's screening. They watched it, came to the screening anyway, and three days later sent me \$5,000 to finish the project!" Redmon sent his tape to the Sundance Festival two months later, never expecting his would be one of the 16 documentaries selected from the United States. Since then, he has been working on putting together a theatrical release of the film while responding to the unprecedented attention his directorial debut is receiving.

Redmon is enthusiastic about his unexpected success and is eager to discuss his next project. "I'm looking at the globalized concept of intimacy as it's portrayed in the Victoria's Secret marketing machine," he explains. "Behind that, I'm exploring intimacy from the perspective of the Mexican labourers who actually sew the lingerie." Redmon's camera will continue to seek those who sell their souls for a strand of beads or a scrap of silk, the global capitalists who collect the fees and the invisible workers who pay the price. ●

MARDI GRAS: MADE IN CHINA

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04/22/05, Driver's Ed

"I can't even understand his lectures. He's all [gibberish in a terrible fake Indian accent]. I mean, if you're going to come to this country... [etc., etc.]"—OVERHEARD AT U OF A

Jesus Christ, are idiot kids still whining about professors with accents? What year is it? Listen, sister: how old are you? Nineteen? Twenty? Nice pyjamas, by the way; just because they're Lululemon doesn't mean you don't look like you just rolled off your futon. Anyway, listen; if you've been living in this multicultural nation of Canada for 20 years and you haven't managed to tune your ear enough to understand an Indian accent, you're too fucking white to take seriously. I mean, my Driver's Ed instructor has an accent thick as a telephone book and you don't see me....

Maybe I'm just making myself feel better for spending the last 16 years with a learner's permit, but I'm of the opinion that driving is like college or university: you shouldn't get into it when you're a teenager. You're too young and stupid to appreciate it. Certainly my classmates seem that way. Fucking teenagers! Was I ever that callow and dumb?

I was. I was probably the biggest little shithead around, in fact, because I thought I was so fucking smart. I mean, look at this 15-year-old doofus sitting here; what an insufferable prick! I can't come down on him for muttering into his cellphone through the entire class (it's in a really small space, a one-room upstairs office in a light-industrial zone; you get what you pay for) because (a) the class is incredibly boring and (b) the instructor sets a really bad example. This whole 15-hour classroom requirement could probably be boiled down to sitcom length if he weren't taking calls every 10 or 15 minutes. I guess it's a one-man operation, but still.

Where was I? Oh yeah; 15-year-old me being a shithead. I'm reminded of what was probably the last time I ever drove with my dad. A total gong show. I can't take all of the blame, though; it was Dad's idea to let me drive home from Radio Shack after picking up our

I'm of the opinion that driving is like college or university: you shouldn't get into it when you're a teenager.

Oh, the Driver's Ed thing? Yeah, you heard me right. Thirty-two years old and I'm finally getting my shit together. Gonna join the Wheelies; my personal, professional and psychological well-being depends on it—the road is calling to me, you know? Highways and byways, mountains and marshes, all the giant things (eggs, perogies, etc.) Alberta has to offer... it's time. I took Driver's Ed when I was 16, of course—ran a stop sign and failed the test—but that was back before they invented computers and the AMA doesn't have a record I can show the insurance people. So here I am, sitting for six hours on the most ass-unfriendly chair known to man, learning how not to kill/be killed on our Karriageways of Karmage. Dig the K's!

brand-new Tandy computer. I mean, picture it: a pathetic teenage nerd like me, driving, with a goddamn dream machine in the trunk (256K extra memory! 16-colour EGA-compatible graphics! 20 megs of hard drive capacity! King's Quest IV!) just waiting to be plugged the fuck in and set the fuck up... he's gonna stand on the pedal like he was driving the getaway car. My dad's a pretty calm guy (and one hell of a driver; ask me to brag about him sometime) but that Aerostar ended up with inch-deep fingerholes in the passenger-side dashboard.

Now I'm back! I'm calmed down and ready for the road. But my point here is this: shut up, you stupid racist bitch. ☹

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Racial profiling

Continued from page 2

assault. Anti-racist academics and activists agree that racism isn't simply a problem of thoughts, attitudes or hurtful comments. According to Dr. Malinda Smith, associate professor of political science at the University of Alberta, such a definition doesn't express the vast and measurable damage of a system of racial privilege on people's lives. Those who believe the effects of racism are merely interpersonal rudeness miss what she calls "the political economy of racism."

"People who are perceived as different also have social disadvantages," says Smith, "in housing, in employment, in income. So people who are, for instance, black—primarily black—are paid less, even though their qualifications are similar. Those are important indicators of the consequences of racism in our society today."

THE CONSEQUENCES to which Smith refers are the results of racial profiling in housing, law enforcement and employment—and according to

exploitation of that group—but by definition, such suppression also lowers the average for all workers.

Racial profiling also enters into housing. Charlene Hay says NAARR receives many complaints of Edmontonians denied rental accommodation on the basis of race, a contention mirrored by a 2003 CBC investigation by Stephane Alari, who performed his own *Black Like Me* experiment. Donning blackface makeup, Alari hunted for an apartment and then for a job, first appearing as black, the next day as white. He said, "As a black guy I asked who I should talk to for the job offer and they said it's full.... And when I went back the day after as a white and I said, 'Do you still need people?' they said, 'We always need people.'"

Despite extensive studies proving who is the true target of racial employment profiling, it's still common to hear the lament in conversation that "white males need not apply," while even a cursory visual inspection of typical Canadian police and fire services, not to mention boardrooms, academies and government offices, show an over-representation of white males. Who needn't

court resulted, more often than not in the case of blacks, in arrests and booking at the police station," continued the report. "Blacks were also twice as often as whites to be held overnight for bail hearings."

Prior to the 9-11 attacks, *Star* journalist Vernon Johnson reported on Niagara Falls border authorities discriminating by race. "Over a 90-minute period on June 5 [2001], I observed that 46 per cent of those visible minorities crossing into Canada had their cars and/or passports searched by Canada Customs and Immigration officials," Johnson wrote. "Only two per cent of whites crossing the same border, over the same time,

were subjected to that search."

In light of such conditions, on Monday MPs from all three opposition parties called on the federal government to place a legal ban on racial profiling. It's unclear whether the Liberals will heed this plea, especially given the government's use of Security Certificates, secret detentions, secret evidence and what the United States calls "extraordinary rendition," the practice of deporting alleged terror suspects to states which practice torture. To date, the primary targets of such policies have been Muslims, including *cause célèbre* Maher Arar. But according to a survey by the Canadian Race Relations

Foundation, racialized policing has substantial public backing; 46.9 per cent of Canadians stated the government should impose no ban on racial profiling.

Unquestionably, given the systemic nature of racial privilege, profit and punishment in Canada, uprooting it entirely may be next to impossible, but most anti-racist activists stress education and public relations campaigns as a start. Clearly, though, without legal sanctions, and with such widespread backing from Canadians, perpetrators of racial profiling will find little reason to end their practices. Their victims will find even less comfort. ☐



numerous studies, they are indeed drastic. The Canadian Race Relations Foundation 2000 report *Unequal Access* says that "after accounting for education level, the unemployment rate is highest among aboriginal peoples, followed by foreign-born visible minorities and Canadian-born visible minorities." University-educated aboriginal peoples are four times as likely as white Canadians to be unemployed, while foreign-born visible minorities are at least twice as likely as white Canadians to be jobless, says the report, and foreign-born Canadians of colour also experience a gap between their education levels and their occupations, with less than half of them finding highly skilled jobs.

Even after adjusting for education, people of colour are still less likely to be hired or later promoted than people of colourlessness: a *Globe and Mail* story from March 10, 2004 revealed that although African-Canadians between 24 and 54 were just as likely to be university-educated as other Canadians of the same age range, their average income was around \$7,400 lower than the national average of \$37,200. Clearly, keeping the wages of any group of workers artificially low is

bother applying seems obvious.

AS DESTRUCTIVE to quality of life as discrimination in employment and housing can be, racial profiling by police is especially frightening, as victims can be publicly humiliated during stops and searches, injured during arrest and even unjustly jailed. In 2003, Ontario's highest court claimed there was "significant" evidence that police racially profile; IMDiversity.com describes a landmark *Toronto Star* analysis that revealed "people of African background who make up 8.1 per cent of the city's population accounted for 23.3 per cent of the arrests, while whites with 62.7 per cent of the population had 58 per cent of the arrests. The most glaring evidence of racial profiling was in the number of blacks charged in after-the-fact offences. More than a third (34 per cent) of all drivers charged with [offences such] as failing to make a change of address on a license, driving without insurance or valid license, or driving while under suspension, were blacks.

"Minor offences, like simple drug possession, which ordinarily netted the offender a ticket to appear in

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BY CHRISTOPHER WIEBE

Junkie business

Calgary writer Elizabeth Hudson's memoir *Snow Bodies: One Woman's Life on the Streets* (NeWest Press) takes us into heroin-fuelled Skid Row Calgary in the early 1970s. It's devastating and engrossing, and reveals the terrible flipside to the airbrushed glory days of the province's oil boom. Hudson brilliantly decants the scents and textures, the strange mixture of euphoria and desolation, that pervaded the times. That she lived to tell about it at all when so many of her friends died or became lost in the oblivion of the prison system is a miracle in itself.

The book begins in *medias res* with 19-year-old Hudson waiting in a getaway car as her boyfriend Peter knocks over a drugstore. When Peter is picked up by the police and sent to prison in Drumheller, Hudson's life loses all semblance of stability and she falls into prostitution as the only way of servicing her drug addiction. We follow her through a vividly drawn world where "Have you got?" is the constant refrain, where police harassment and abuse from johns and probation officers mingles with occasional acts of caring. Over the next few years Hudson shuttles between Calgary's "Strip"—Seventh Avenue hotels like the York, Regis and Calgarian—and Vancouver's stark and ugly Hastings Street in search of a reliable supply of heroin.

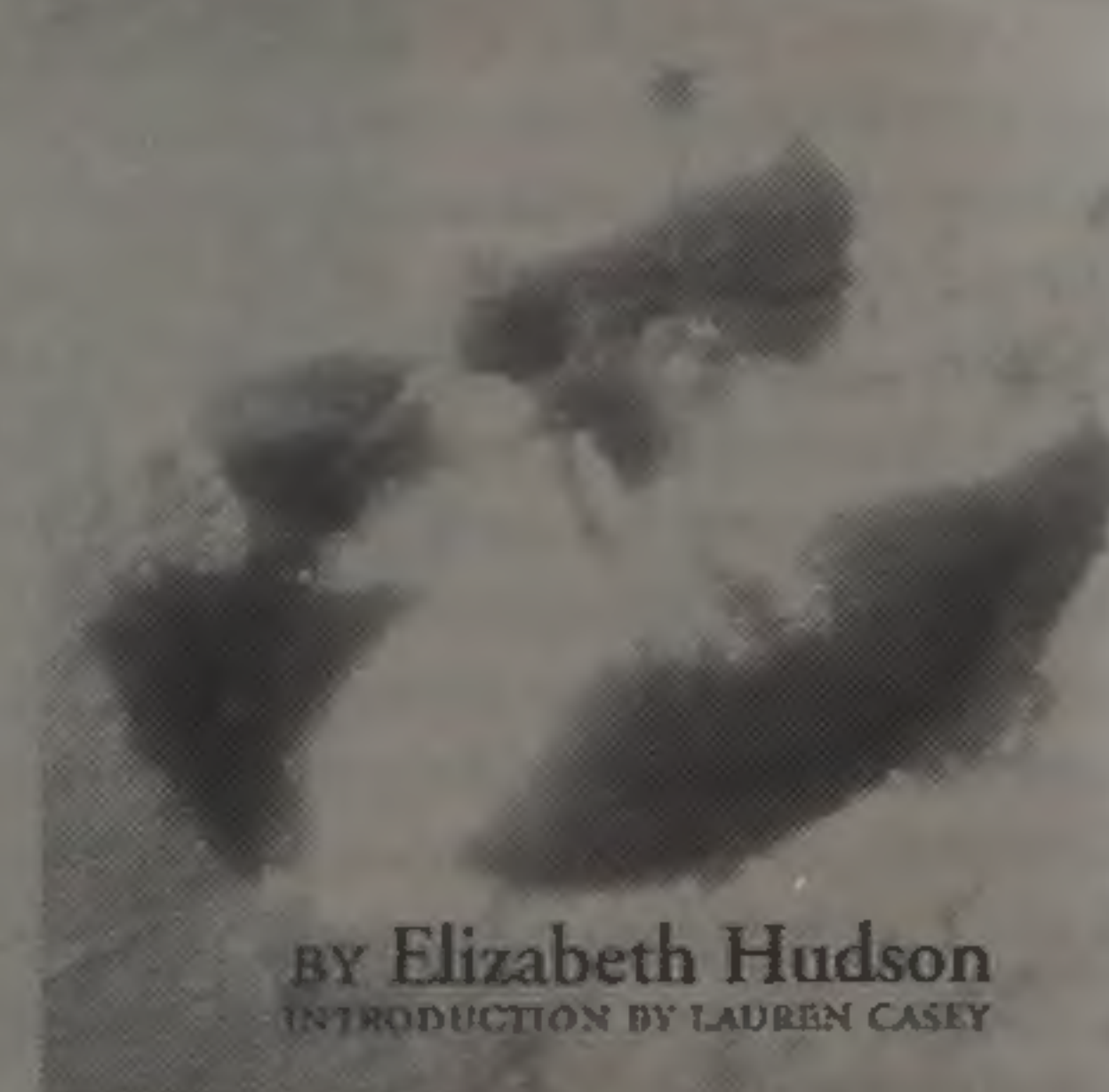
This all sounds bleak, but *Snow Bodies* is driven by the exploration of desperate friendships that flourish briefly and are casually discarded for an easy ripoff, only to be warily struck up again. There is a dysfunctional sense of community in this parallel universe of addicts, though it is a community with little trust. There's Chuck, the ex-plumber-cum-roommate, there's Lanny, who briefly uses Hudson to support his own drug habit, and there's Vie, whom Hudson saves from dying while hitchhiking out of Banff in a blizzard.

While Hudson has a great ear for dialogue, she also paints scenes straight out of Hieronymus Bosch: "As usual, the bedspread was half on the bed and half in a heap on the floor. Cigarette butts stuffed into pop bottles and milk cartons filled the room with the stinking odour of stale smoke. Chicken and pizza boxes with food still splattered inside covered the top of the dresser. Our pants and T-shirts were tossed in a corner as if they'd been regurgitated there. Sue and I opened the door and stepped in, oblivious to the chaos about us. Then, each jockeying the other for position, we raced to the medicine cabinet for the fits. Silently, we left another red prick mark on our punctured arms. Aware only of the waves of pleasure our brains emitted, we slid

slowly to the floor. The rush subsided, leaving us afloat in a world of padded reality, and the Teflon of the high held us there." There is a quasi-monastic purity to a junkie's life. Addiction has reorganized the natural order such that life has been distilled to regularly "fixing" and getting the money to enable this through prostitution or B&Es. And in this, there is fierce sort of clarity—even honesty.

Only later, in bits and pieces, does the reader find the answer to the agonizing question of how Hudson (whose father is a doctor and whose mother is an accountant) came to be on the street. A social outcast in high school, Hudson's involvement in Calgary's hippie subculture introduced her to the unseemly side of the city. She pleads with her "tough love" parents to be allowed to come home but is repeatedly rejected. "It was a joke to say 'straighten out,'" Hudson writes, "when I'd no one to turn to, no place to go and no money or assets other than my body. I'd walked

snow bodies
one woman's life on the streets



through a door that society locked behind me, and my family seemed intent on keeping it that way." In the end, it is her grandmother and a friend from university who helped her off the streets in 1974.

In the recessionary shabbiness of the late '80s and early '90s, there was a brief pop-culture infatuation with society's "gritty underbelly" in films such as *Drugstore Cowboy* and the resurrection of the writings of William S. Burroughs. It was a trite, romanticized phase. Not untouched, I remember going into the infamous bars of Winnipeg's Main Street—the New Occidental, the Bell—to slum, I guess, and see the denizens of this strange netherworld (as social reformers like Henry Mayhew had done in Victorian London). But honestly, I had no eyes to see, no ears to hear.

Hudson's discontinuous narrative takes us into the very fabric of that "invisible" world, not to use it as a moral cautionary tale (as social conservatives might wish) but as a witness, as a testament to the people who disappeared. There is nothing lurid or voyeuristic or sensationalistic in Hudson's prose that keeps the reader at a distance. Instead, she settles us into the strange normalcy of an addict's world, a place where understanding and an honest kind of empathy can take root. ☐

Hollywood's higher mathematics

Discursive film historian David Thomson attempts to calculate *The Whole Equation*

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

As anyone who's ever dipped into his mammoth reference work *A Biographical Dictionary of Film* knows, David Thomson has apparently spent nearly every waking hour of his life inside screening rooms. You could probably say that of any of the great film critics—Pauline Kael, for instance, once wrote a book called *5,001 Nights at the Movies*, a title that was probably a gross underestimate—but what makes Thomson unusual among his peers is that he seems less interested in watching what's going on onscreen than in fantasizing about the lives all those glamorous characters (and the actors playing them) might be leading after the projector is turned off. He's even written two novels, *Suspects* and *Silver Light*, in which characters from various movies interact with each other, as if they were real people who kept on existing even though the movies that had given birth to them claimed their stories had reached THE END. Thomson writes about fictional characters as if they were real and real people as if they were fictional—in his *Biographical Dictionary*, he cheerfully ascribes all sorts of psychological motivations and personality flaws to actors and directors, many of whom he's never encountered except as flickering shadows upon a screen.

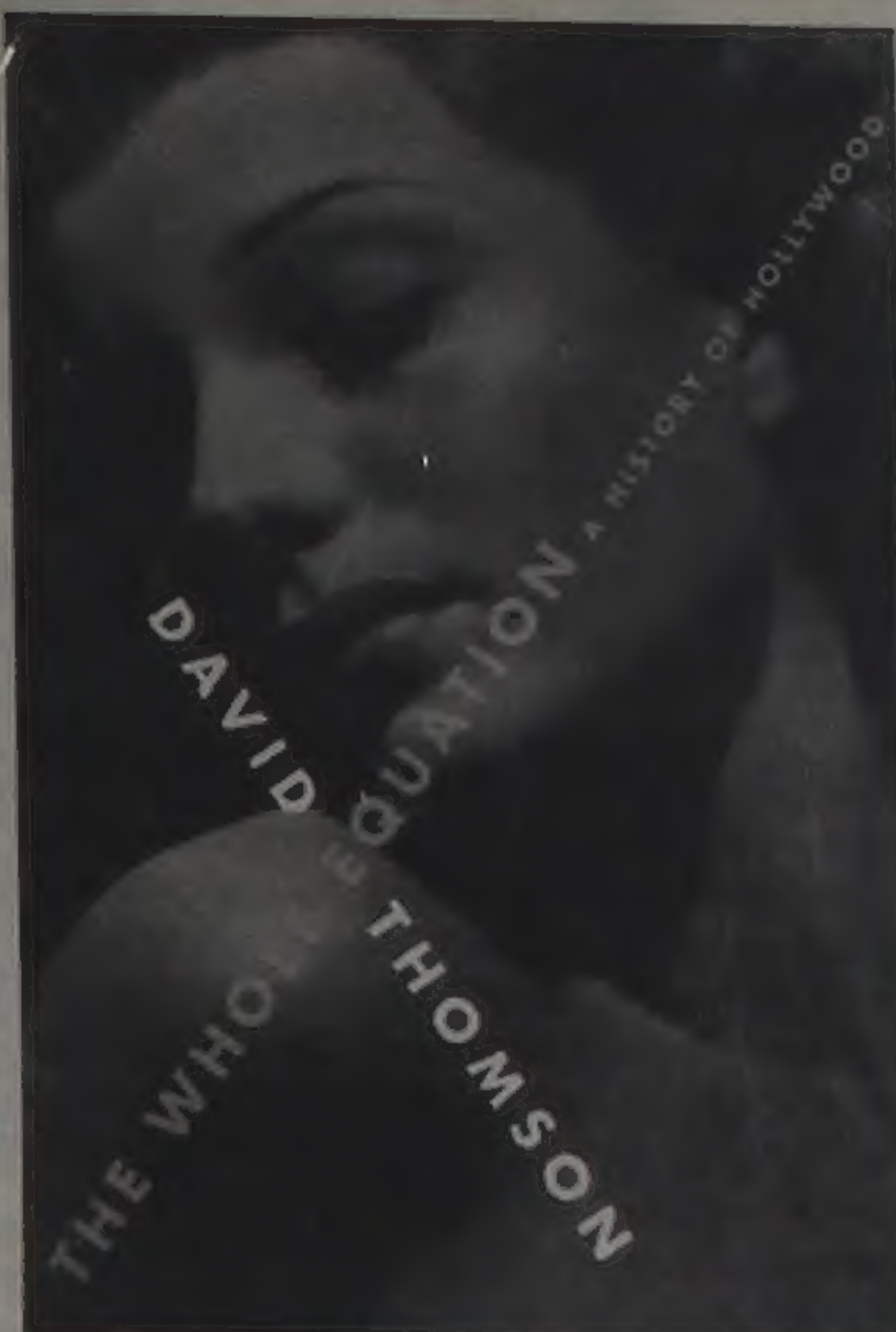
To a newcomer, Thomson's writing can be infuriating: his insights frequently seem the result of dazzlingly poetic prose than diligent research, and he has an opium addict's fondness for long, dreamy tangents. Thomson couldn't stick to the point if you held a gun to his head (or a match to his personal print of *The Big Sleep*), but that's part of the pleasure of reading his latest book *The Whole Equation*, which bills itself on the cover as "A History of Hollywood" but which is really an excuse for Thomson the oracle to ruminate for a few hundred pages on the virtues and drawbacks of the studio system, the public fascination with celebrities and the uneasy relationship between the moneymen of the film industry and the creative geniuses toiling resentfully in their employ. (Thomson's title comes from a line in F. Scott Fitzgerald's unfinished Hollywood novel *The Last Tycoon*, in which a character opines, "Not half a dozen men have ever been able to keep the whole equation of pictures in their heads," and he acts as if Fitzgerald's movie-producer hero Monroe Stahr were as flesh-and-blood a figure as Irving Thal-

berg, the real-life MGM exec who inspired him.)

Thomson is fascinated by the fact that the movies have attracted so many visionary, egocentric creators, hardly any of whom have ever been willing to put their own money on the line for their art. And in the rare cases where filmmakers have been able to achieve total artistic and financial freedom—for instance, when Charlie Chaplin made *City Lights* or when David O. Selznick made *Duel in the Sun*—they found themselves paralyzed by the infinite possibilities that suddenly stretched out before them, shooting miles of footage and hoping to get it all sorted out in the editing room. Thomson isn't arguing that you have to keep a leash on those crazy directors or else they'll run wild, though; he's too sophisticated a thinker for that. Rather, he's interested in the complicated psychology of the movie business—the fact that directors, actors, executives and the audience all need different things from movies, and the mysterious way that, if the images on the screen can perfectly calibrate all those people's dreams, a film can live forever. And make millions of dollars besides.

Thomson is most interested in Hollywood's "Golden Age," the era before antitrust legislation caused the studios to lose control over the theatre chains and the rising agent class wrested control over their stables of actors away from them. "I have nothing to say about *Star Wars*," Thomson writes, for instance. "There is not enough in it; the fullest response is 'Wow!' or pressing the repeat button. It is, for good and ill, sensational." And who can blame him for thinking that way? Fat, tired old George Lucas is an incredibly boring figure, especially when compared to people like Charles Chaplin, Orson Welles and that sentimental tyrant Louis B. Mayer, each of whom Thomson devotes individual chapters to.

BIZARRELY, THOUGH, Thomson also devotes a long section of his book to Nicole Kidman, his favourite contemporary actress. This chapter is prime Thomson: it initially seems like an embarrassingly self-indulgent confession of love for a woman he's never even spoken to, but it eventually turns into one of the most insightful, mesmerizing essays I've ever read about the erotic hold of movies. Not that Thomson is about to give up on movies yet—he reports that even an ordeal like *The Matrix Revolutions* can't dim his appetite for them. He ends the book by telling a story about being on a flight from London to San Francisco; even though the airplane he was in was flying 39,000 feet over the profoundly beautiful icy landscape of northern Canada, nearly everyone on



board obeyed the flight attendants when they asked them to close their windows "so that some dreadful contemporary movie could be projected in maybe the worst conditions a movie is ever seen." I wish I were in the seat next to him; I'd love to hear what he thought of it. ♡

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Christopher's wokkin'!

The takeout at Wok 'n' Go isn't just tasty; it comes in those great fold-up Chinese food boxes too!

By CHRISTOPHER THRALL

There are three things you need to know about **Wok 'n' Go**: they have a great logo, they serve ample amounts of tasty Chinese food and their takeout comes in those little foldy containers you usually only see

in movies. (If you're anything like me, you're already planning your trip because of those takeout containers.) After a slow rush hour's drive away from our downtown home, my family walked into a Spartan storefront that suggested Wok 'n' Go was intended

RESTAURANTS

only for takeout or delivery. Undaunted, we seated ourselves at one of the token tables festooned with magazines for patrons awaiting their orders and leaned back in our folding chairs to peruse the menu.

Although I was mildly distracted by the steady stream of pick-ups,

telephone calls and bursts of tantalizing steam from the busy woks behind the counter, I was pleased to note that the menu covered all the basics. The *à la carte* selection could give a sit-down restaurant a run for its money, yet only the seafood dishes pushed the \$10 mark. I was busy devising the perfect smorgasbord for us when my wife pointed out that (a) we were only two people, and (b) the menu featured dinner combos I had completely overlooked.

Seizing on these cost-effective options, we decided on Dinner A for two (\$14.95). To round out the victuals, I requested wonton soup (\$2.75) and two cans of pop at \$1 each. I returned to my seat, expecting to be called when the food was ready, and observed the staff behind the till. There was an organic flow present, a well-planned and well-trained orchestration of food delivery that conveyed both expertise and assurance. This crew knew exactly what it was doing.

A damsel from behind the till brought us our pops and fortune cookies while we waited. I was a little surprised: the pick-up environment hadn't led me to believe that they had table service. Since we had obviously decided to eat in, she asked if



we wanted plates and utensils. Hell, no! I was excited to eat right out of the takeout containers with chopsticks! The young lady returned with the rest of our order, and I discovered that my \$21.08 had bought us a heck of a lot of food. Each waxed cardboard container was full and the chicken fried rice was overflowing.

ITS LIGHT BROTH translucent to the bottom of its container, the wonton soup smelled heavenly and tasted divine. I interspersed slurps of soup with bites of a crisp, slender spring roll. My wife was happily devouring

tender beef and crisp mixed vegetables out of another box. The sweet and sour ribs were a little fatty, but the sauce was a thick and syrupy treat that glowed with the same colour as the nuclear radiation in schlocky sci-fi films. That sauce brought out the best in our outstanding chicken fried rice. Light and fluffy with plump vegetables strewn throughout, the rice held a delicious, slightly salty aftertaste. We learned quickly that the meals were prepared with takeout or delivery in mind and as such, the contents were a little warmer than we expected. Digging in immediately begs for a scalding.

Full to the brim, we closed up the containers to return home, marveling again at the convenient serving-slash-carryout boxes. We took nearly half our order back with us for late-night or lunchtime enjoyment. After cracking her fortune cookie, a funny look crossed my wife's face. "Have you ever seen a bilingual fortune?" she asked. Sure enough, mine awkwardly told me that I could expect fortune to shine on me—a sentiment that sounded much better translated into French on the opposite side.

Overall, Wok 'n' Go offered a more than satisfactory Chinese food experience; the portions were both tasty and generous. I won't rush back to dine in, but if I need to pick up a feast on the way somewhere or a party is jonesing for some Chinese, I would definitely give Wok 'n' Go a call. If everybody gets to pick one dish, I'll be trying the intriguing Salt and Hot Pepper Calamari. ☺

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Breakfast epiphanies

A morning meal at Friends and Neighbours Café is as comforting an experience as the name suggests

By IAIN ILICH

Like a good breakfast, but that doesn't always mean that I get to eat one; in fact, more often than not my morning routine involves shoveling spoonfuls of mushy instant oatmeal into my mouth and washing it down with a couple of mugs of coffee. I often want a more elaborate breakfast—one with potatoes, pancakes, syrup and eggs—but just can't be bothered to spend an hour cooking a big morning meal, especially when I know that I'm going to be toiling in the kitchen later on in the day. So, even though I love eating a big breakfast, I'm generally too lazy to actually go about whipping one up. And that's where places like **Friends and Neighbours Café** come in.

Friends and Neighbours was on Whyte Ave before Whyte Ave became trendy, serving university-area residents their budget-priced all-day breakfasts since 1981 (or so says the menu). Even those who have never been inside have likely given it a curious glance while walking between the U of A and the main drag of Whyte, a couple of blocks to the east.

When my wife and I arrived at around 11 a.m. on a Saturday morning, the café was a buzzing hive of activity. The décor was fairly limited, but none of the smiling patrons seemed to notice. A space heater

dangled from the ceiling in the back, the front counter appeared to have been covered in black plastic garbage bags and the scattered whiteboards advertising the daily specials were hard to read without straining your neck. The atmosphere, though, was fantastic: happy, chatty friends regaling each other with stories of the past week's events, university students looking to fill up on a home-cooked breakfast and young families out for a morning treat. Youngsters, oldsters and everyone in between packed the restaurant, leaving not even a single table available for us.

While we waited to be seated, my wife and I watched enviously as busy servers delivered plates full of tasty-looking food to jovial diners. At the table closest to us, a particularly intriguing dish arrived which my wife and I both tried to analyze from a distance without creeping anyone out by staring at their breakfast. Within a few minutes, a table had freed up, and we were taken over to a spot by the till, smack-dab

BREAKFAST

in the middle of the action. We were given menus and left to mull over our options for a few minutes, settling on our choices by the time our server eventually paid us a visit.

NEEDING MY MORNING DOSE of caffeine, I went for a cup of their "fresh ground" coffee (\$1.35), which was actually pretty decent. My wife decided on a large glass of orange juice (\$1.95), which, she found out, was not nearly as large as she was expecting. Deciding on our meals was a bit harder. Aside from the printed menu, there were also a bunch of breakfast specials described on boards around the restaurant.



Did I want an omelet? Did I want French toast? My instincts pushed me towards ordering something with pancakes, the breakfast delicacy that tops my list of comfort foods. Thankfully, curiosity got the better of me, and I ordered the vegetarian breakfast special (\$7.95), a combination of tofu, red and green peppers, onions, tomatoes, cheese and salsa, served with hash browns and toast. Our server heartily recommended it, mentioning that the veggie breakfast special had been her introduction to tofu, and that she was pleasantly surprised by how good it was.

My wife, perhaps looking to compensate for my meatless breakfast, picked the steak and eggs (\$8.95), which consisted of two eggs, toast, hash browns and a steak, and also happened to be the most expensive breakfast item on the menu.

The toast, which was soft on the inside and crunchy on the outside (in other words, perfect), was the first to arrive, followed shortly by the rest of our meal. My wife liked her steak, which was large and well-

cooked, though the star of the show was my vegetarian breakfast special. It was a delightfully fun mix of veggies and salsa, tossed with strips of tender-but-firm tofu. The combination of sweet and sour tastes, along with the diversity of textures, made for a refreshingly different kind of breakfast. But the best part—and the element that tied the whole dish together—was the fresh basil that had been chopped and sprinkled on top of it all. The only disappointment was the hash browns, which were basically just slightly-fried, par-

tially-mashed potatoes. Blah.

Even though my wife had picked the most expensive breakfast item on the menu, and even though my vegetarian breakfast special was only a buck cheaper, we still managed to keep our total to about \$20 before tax. The décor wasn't exactly elaborate, but the inviting, earthy atmosphere of Friends and Neighbours was more than enough to bring me back. ☺

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Sunshine Village

A fortuitous snowfall meant the mountains had put on their Sunday best for our weekend ski trip

BY LACHLAN MACKINTOSH

Our Sunday began well, and like most promising Sundays, Saturday night had something to do with it. An overnight snowfall in Banff National Park meant our ski party was extra-keen when Sunday morning rolled around. Jenn, our impromptu guide for the day, picked us up in Canmore in her diesel Jetta and had our skis and poles in her Thule before I could say "Orville Redenbacher." She checked to see if we needed to make a coffee stop before getting on the road. Nope, we were ready to roll. Twenty minutes later we drove right past the arm-swinging parking lot attendant and continued into the staff parking lot at the base of Sunshine.

Jenn, you see, worked for six years at Sunshine before trading in her ski-instructor badge. We reconnoitered with the rest of our party—James the art librarian, Jason the Winterpegger (er, I mean Winnipegger), Marjorie the snowboarder, and fair-haired Jenny, another vivacious ex-ski instructor, albeit from rival mountain Lake Louise—and climbed aboard the bright yellow gondola. As we rode up to Sunshine Village, Jenn said "I'll be on this gondola every day and night for a week if I counted all the time I spent here each season." Jenn is the consummate host. While she answered my persistent questions about what kind of mile-high escapades are actually possible in the eight-person gondola, she pulled out a bag of homemade chocolate-chip cookies she had baked and passed them around.

At the top of the gondola, at 7,200 feet, beneath warm sunshine and broken clouds, sat Sunshine Village. From here, four of Sunshine's numerous chairlifts take you into 360 degrees of skiing. I was quickly reminded that experienced skiers spend little time doing anything

other than skiing. I could barely get my boots locked into my bindings when we were all off for Wawa Chair, which the locals recommend for its morning sun and wide-open blue bowls.

Although we started the morning late, we criss-crossed briskly from Standish to Lookout Mountain, taking in seven or eight fast runs. Jenny had lent me a pair of real goggles, so unlike my first two ski days this winter, at Lake Louise and Norquay, I could actually see where I was going. Goggles are also vital for gauging "the viz," which Jenn and Jenny explained to me is skiers' shorthand for visibility. Still, I barely noted the green circles or blue squares flying by as we emerged from a steep, mogul-infested black diamond chute into a narrow blue-green traverse. I think we took a run called Schoolmarm and came out on Forget-Me-Not, but I could be wrong.

It was easier to identify the lifts we rode. The Jackrabbit Quad Chair covers a short little hump at the knee of Lookout Mountain. During the quick ride up, Jenn told me about the snow-farming techniques that allow Sunshine to harvest the white stuff using long snow fences. They use big Cats to transport, or "push the snow," Jenn told me, to other spots that can use the coverage. This way Sunshine captures the huge annual snowfall they're famous for before the howling winds of the continental divide blow the snow down the mountain.

WHEN I ASKED about the best place for a beer at Sunshine, Jenn's husband jumped in with, "Mad Trapper's—it's the old log building right in the centre of the village." Twenty minutes later we were inside for a late lunch, red-faced, pulling off layers and toques. "How's the Mad

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Jenn Evelyn

Trapper burger?" I asked our waitress. Pure shit," she said, with perfect comic timing. She took our beer order and said she would return. Jolted by the waitress's Freudian menu moment, the guys ordered the chili and poutine. I went ahead and ordered the Mad Trapper Burger anyway; after all, she qualified her earlier statement by adding, "You know, it's hit and miss."

Meanwhile, Jenny was having engine trouble—i.e., she was stepping right out of her bindings, which is not a good thing. So, Jenn took her namesake straight over to the Sunshine Village Rental Tent where they got some amazing service from a guy named Eric, who had Jenny out on some demo skis before you could say "Gus the Redenbacher, Jr." Soon, Jenn and Jenny found our upstairs pub table and helped us mop up the poutine. The report on the chili was good, although it was early yet. The Mad Trapper burger went over fine with me. Over a pitcher of beer, the guys urged me to put the "burger is pure shit" part in this story, but since I'm friends with the waitress, I figured I'd leave it out.

BACK IN ACTION after lunch, we had a handful of runs off the Continental Divide Express. A route down the Bye Bowl has benefited from recent snowfalls. Between runs, Jenn and I sat on foot from the top of the

Continental Divide Chair up another 100 feet to the top of Lookout Mountain. At just a hair under 9,000 feet, this is the access point to Delirium Dive. An L-shaped set of steel stairs, looking like something from an offshore oil rig, descends to drop-in points along the thin ridge. I recalled Edgar's lines from *King Lear*: "You are now within a foot/Of the extreme verge: for all beneath the moon/Would I not leap upright." Looking over the top of the mountain in two directions, with sharp snow blasting upwards into our wind-burned faces, I wouldn't leap at all. I was glad to boot-ski back down the way we came up to where the rest of our party was waiting for a couple of last runs.

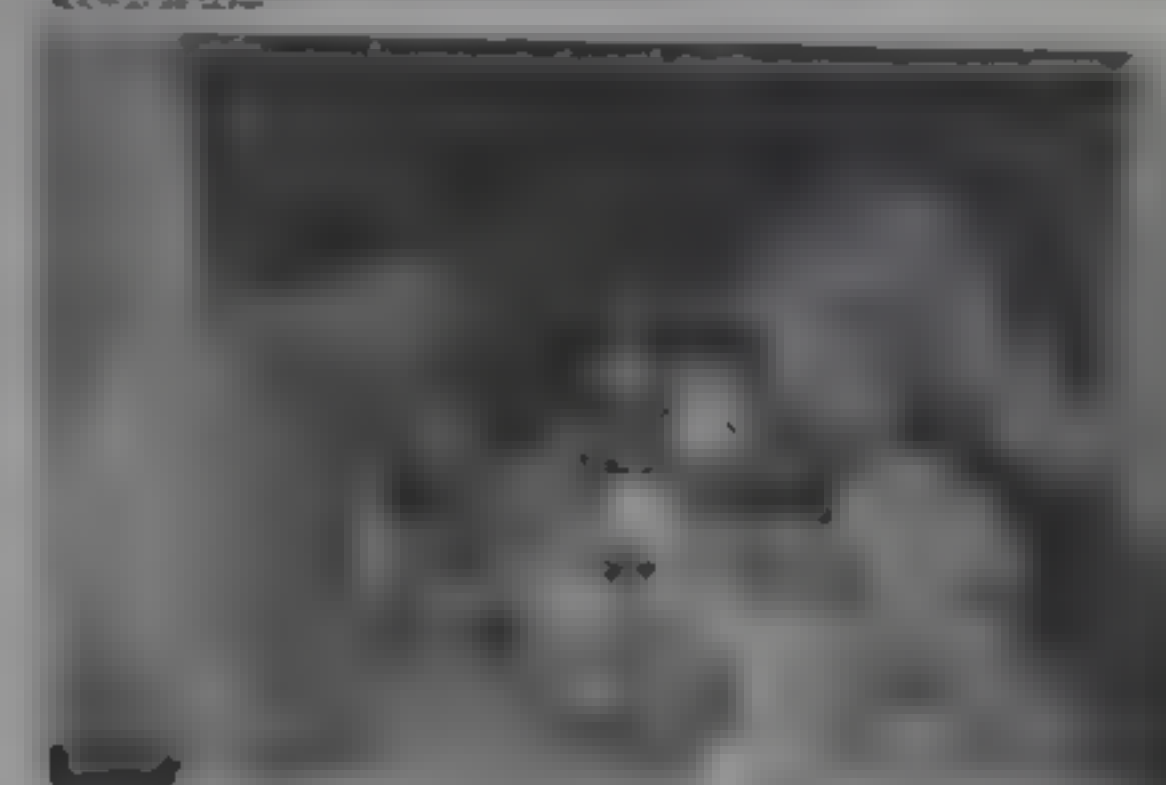
For us, our day was almost done, although we pushed our kind-hearted hostess about an hour past her suggested departure time. For you, believe it or not, it's not too late to buy your Sunshine ski pass. A spring ski pass at Sunshine is good for the final two months of skiing, right through to Holiday Monday, May 23, with prices ranging from just \$93 for a child to \$279 for adults, with various discounts available. There are also outdoor concerts every weekend throughout the spring. Pencil in the weekend of April 30-May 1, when perennial Vancouver rockers 54-40 play Sunshine Village's 7,200-foot bowl. ♡



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Whistler a no-go

How my long-awaited, seat-of-my-pants B.C. ski trip took less than 24 hours to completely fall apart

By ADAM SMITH

The clock was ticking and I still wasn't sure how I was going to get myself from Edmonton to Whistler. Unlike a trip to Canmore, Banff or the Heart of Millwoods, Whistler is really, *really* far away. And

generally when people are planning to make a trip of such significant dimensions, they prepare for it, primarily by arranging some mode of transportation. Personally, I have a history of not pushing these arrangements. I let them come together naturally, like the way Big Daddy let his kid name himself Frankenstein. It's nice and easy that way; it flows, and hey, I'm lazy! And things usually do come together for me, with just a little Gaelic luck and some gentle nudging.

For my Whistler trip, the loose end of transportation needed to be tied up right until the last minute, when my associate, Mr. R. Brennen, called me and confirmed our ride. Whistler had just received some

much-awaited snow, and we had our ride confirmed. It was working. The think-fast-and-wait philosophy was on; don't push it, baby, it'll go. Hearing the news, I was ecstatic; I gave a cheer to the Teamsters and downed my pint at Filthy McNasty's. It was

MISADVENTURE

going to be a painful drive early the next morning, but it's always worth it; I could almost smell the Sunshine Coast, I could see the mountains surrounding us as we drove into the Rockies, the skies opening and closing so many more times as we passed through the plentiful ranges of Beau-

tiful British Columbia: the Selkirks, the Purcells, the Monashees, through the North Okanagan and into the Coastal Mountain Range.

Whistler-Blackcomb is a huge two-mountain resort set in a picturesque village. It's pricy—like, Aspen-goes-Canada pricy—but it's beautiful, and it's home to some of the best terrain in the world. It is constantly named Best Mountain and Best Skiing/Snowboarding by all the ski publications, and they underwent an extensive expansion this year. Although this strange El Niño-esque winter did Whistler no favours, they're still open and have just received some new snow with even more promised in the forecast.

Whistler's newly opened Flutebowl offers skiers and snowboarders an "inbounds backcountry experience." And this resort town, with its internationally acclaimed reputation, doesn't stop with just riding. A few years ago, Zip Trek tours assembled a network of cable suspension bridges, boardwalks and Ziplines that allow guests to journey deep into, above and around the ancient coastal-temperate rainforest canopy that surrounds the Fitzsimons Creek Valley, the whitewater creek that divides Whistler and Blackcomb Mountains. Guests journey through the trails and zip down cables ranging from 80 to 1,100 feet in length, secured to the cable by a climbing harness and a pulley. The



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and a half-hour trip costs \$98 for adults, and a lift ticket at Whistler-Blackcomb currently rings in at a mid-late-season discounted rate of \$65.

THE DEBILITATING BLOW seemed to arrive only seconds later. En route to Sam Wok, my phone rang. My ride was at the police station. The Gestapo had stopped him due to a burnt-out headlight and the scent of alcohol on his breath. His ride was impounded and he was handed a 24-hour suspension—unjustly so, he maintains. The next morning I looked into flights and Greyhound routes, but neither option was feasible. I packed my stuff and called a friend to take me to the highway. I grabbed a fat black felt-tip marker and made a sign that I was sure would take me where I wanted to go: "Jetset Victim: Whistler."

But as we rolled toward the Yel-

lowhead, I mulled over my situation once more. I was sick, I was tired, and I didn't want to spend the night on the road. But I'd already come this far! Gambling intuition came into play; I had to fold this hand. There was a lot in the pot, but I had losing cards. I could follow the ridiculous inertia that I had stirred up and find myself shivering in a cold ditch outside Blue River, B.C. or I could lay these babies down and cut my losses. In a rare and treacherous moment of clarity, I threw the cards onto the table. (7-2 offsuit).

Folding the Whistler trip was a painful move; I had been looking forward to riding Whistler for years, and it looked like another season will come to a close for me without the ride. "C'est la vie," said the Indian, and we turned the car around, picked up some shotgun shells and went skeet-shootin'. ☺



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The EASYRIDER Condition Report

LOCAL

Rabbit Hill - 15cm new snow, 60cm base, 100% of terrain open
Snow Valley - 15cm new snow, 60cm base, 100% of terrain open

ALBERTA

Castle Mtn - Closed for the season
Can. Olympic Park - 6cm new snow, 50cm base
Lake Louise - 1cm new snow, 173cm base, 10 lifts and 111 runs open plus gondola
Marmot Basin - 18cm new snow, 136 - 155cm base, all lifts and 84 runs open
Mt. Norquay - 12cm new snow, 86 - 168cm base, 5 lifts and 26 runs open plus 1/2 pipe
Nakiska - 3cm new snow, 60 - 123cm base, 5 lifts and 28 runs open
Pass Powderkeg - 80cm base, open thurs - sun
Sunshine - 3cm new snow, 195cm base, 12 lifts and 107 runs open
Tawatnaw - open, new snow, good conditions

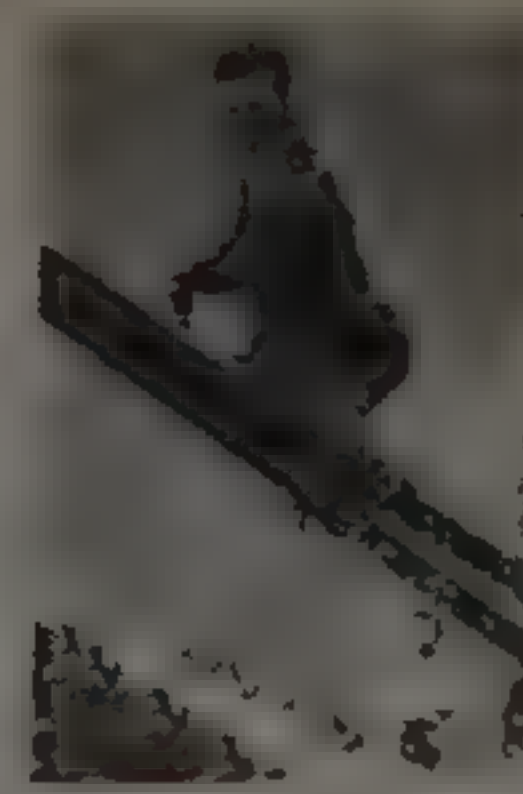
B.C.

Apex - 148cm base, 4 lifts and 60 runs open
Big White - 21cm base, 14 lifts and 90 runs open
Fernie - 4cm new snow, 188cm base, 10 lifts and 98 runs open
Fairmont - 10cm new snow, all lifts and runs open
Kicking Horse - 1cm new snow, 169cm base, 95% of terrain open
Kimberley - Closed for the season
Mt. Washington - Closed for the season
Panorama - 23cm new snow, 116cm base, 9 lifts and 65 runs open
Powder King - 16cm new snow, 150 - 420cm base, 2 lifts and 24 runs open
Powder Springs - 5cm new snow, 160cm base, lifts closed for season, Cat Powder open
Red Mtn - Closed for the season
Silver Star - 188cm base, 10 lifts and 88 runs open
Sun Peaks - 4cm new snow, 152cm base, 76% of terrain open
Whistler Blackcomb - 3cm new snow, 186cm base, both terrain parks open
Whitewater - 1cm new snow, 199cm base

USA

Big Mtn - 3cm new snow, 35 - 175cm base, 4 lifts and 54 runs open, reduced rates in effect
Big Sky - 13cm new snow, 147 - 220cm base, 95% of terrain open
Crystal Mtn - 145cm base, 100% of terrain open
49 Degrees - Closed for the season
Great Divide Ski Area - 30 - 50cm base, excellent conditions
Lookout Pass - 2cm new snow, 45 - 110cm base, open thurs - sun
Mt. Spokane - Closed for the season
Schweitzer Mtn - Closed for the season
Silver Mtn - 50 - 100cm base, open thurs - sun
Sun Valley - 25cm new snow, 115 - 162cm base

SnowZone



ski tips

By COLIN CATHREA

The skids are alright

Skis are not skates. They do not carve quite as effectively as Kurt Browning's blades. Of course, that's not to say that you won't encounter a run that resembles a rink. I've seen a few places where natural springs under the snow can put a beautiful blue sheet of ice across a run. There are also times when the freeze-thaw effect can bulletproof an entire mountain. This happens a lot in the spring. If you're one of those diehard skiers who get to the hill on the May long weekend promptly at 9 a.m., you know what I'm talking about.

Skidding your skis is an inevitable part of skiing ice, but what's important is how you *control* the skid. Inexperienced skiers usually try to stop the skid immediately by leaning uphill and trying desperately to grip their ski edges.

You usually see them clenching their teeth and uttering phrases like "Whooooo!" and "Shit!" Not only will such evasive actions *not* stop you from skidding, but they will usually result in a fall. If you want to see if you're leaning or banking your turns, try a run down an icy hill. If you're not balanced over your skis with your knees doing the edging, you'll be on your butt real fast. When the snow is icy, you're going to slip a little no matter how sharp your edges are.

Try this little exercise sometime. Stand across a fairly steep hill. Roll your knees up the hill and, most importantly, down the hill. This will edge and flatten your skis, allowing them to sideslip downhill. Now add direction to your sideslip. Press your knees forward and release the edge. The tips of your skis will drop lower than the tails. This is a forward sideslip. Next, lean back and roll the knees downhill. The opposite will happen. Your tails drop downhill. Isn't physics a blast? Practising this move will allow you to find the balanced position necessary for proper skid control.

Rather than fighting a skid on ice, learn to control it. Learning controlled slipping will improve your balance and confidence on icy days—as well as the condition of your bum when the day is over. ☺



board tips

By JAMES RADKE

Please re-leash me

A safety leash is a piece of equipment that every snowboarder should have. Unlike skis, a snowboard lacks a brake—and if you don't have a leash on your board and it detaches from your leg, you could be liable for any damage to property or people that it may cause. Some mountains even employ leash police whose job it is to ensure snowboarders are wearing their leashes; some won't even allow you on the lifts with out one.

The leash should be attached to your front binding and worn on your front leg or foot. (You'll be taking your rear foot out of the binding when you skate or stand in lift lines.) The leash

should be worn in a comfortable position, and it should be short enough not to drag on the snow where it could get caught under your board.


Most leashes are "one-part leashes," one end of which attaches to your binding while the other buckles around your lower leg. There are also two part leashes, which you can more easily disconnect from and reconnect to your board. Also, there are leashes that attach to your binding but also have a "pincher"-type hook on the other end that you can attach to your bootlaces or a ring that goes on your bootlaces. All these types of leashes are effective; whichever one you choose is up to your individual preference.

If there are no signs at the lift stations explaining the mountain's policy on leashes or back foot placement seek advice at the ticket office or ask the lift attendant. Beginners are advised to travel on lifts with their rear foot released from its binding, as it allows for a quick getaway should you fall off the lift.

Until the binding manufacturers come up with a different solution to the problem of runaway snowboards, we're all stuck wearing our leashes whenever we hit the hills. ☺


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Live action

Politic Live's Arlo Maverick and Dirt Gritie effect a Party for a Cause

By DAVID BERRY

It's not hard to tell that Arlo Maverick (a.k.a. Marlon Wilson) is a rapper. He's an easy talker, his words flowing so naturally out of his thoughts and over his tongue that it's almost as though he'd been waiting his entire life to answer the question you just asked him.

Sitting in the cavernous confines of an afterhours downtown food court beside his equally loquacious partner-in-Politic-Live, Dirt Gritie (Bert Richards)—the third member of the group, Bigga Nolte, couldn't make it—Maverick has paused, weighing his words before he gets set to answer a question about Edmonton's new "urban" station, Bounce 91.7. "I think I'm going to bite my tongue on that one," he says with a sheepish grin.

"I won't bite my tongue," chimes in Gritie, hardly missing a beat. "I'm not very happy with it. All in all, it's a good station, and we can understand their agenda—they have to play for the people who buy their advertising and reach their target market, right? But no locals: You know what I mean? You're not really supporting the scene, and that's what you said you were coming here to do. It's not the first place to make locals more heard and more seen, and for that, well—it's hard."

"I think we do have to give them more time to see what they're

going to do," adds Maverick as Gritie trails off, "because there were initiatives that were promised as far as developing talent. Not to knock them, but it's a very confusing message that they're sending out. The bid was for an urban station, but what we've seen so far is a Top 40 station, and Edmonton isn't a big enough city for two Top 40 stations. Maybe they'll actually start playing the kind of stuff they said they were going to play in the beginning,

PREVIEW HIP HOP

but..." Maverick pauses again before continuing: "You know, I guess they look at it like Edmonton being a more 'white' city, so they have to play more Top 40, or more pop-appealing stuff, but there's plenty of urban music that is appealing to the masses that they're not playing. Tone-Loc, of course, was really good 15 years ago, but we're in 2005, not 1990 or 1988.

"It's interesting," Maverick continues, "because when the station was first coming in, one of the biggest things that a lot of people from the community looked at was, 'Is it just going to be playing Usher and R Kelly and Jay-Z every hour on the hour?' and a lot of people were concerned about whether they would hear your Mos Defs or Dilated Peoples, your Common, but it all of a sudden ended up being that we're not even hearing Jay-Z or Ludacris or 50 Cent. I want to give them time to grow, but at the same time, they have to give us something to work with, you know?"

AND THAT'S HIM biting his tongue! But the boys from Politic Live have bigger things on their mind these days than a disappointing radio station—namely their upcoming show to support the Youth Emergency Shelter, dubbed Party for a Cause. The second incarnation of what the group hopes will be an annual benefit for a different charity every year, it's even more impressive when you consider the fact that Politic Live already hosts Hip Hop 4 Hunger, an annual gig for the Food Bank, and has headlined several other charity benefits over the past few years. As Maverick and Gritie explain, the generosity comes as much from a hip-hop sensibility as their own upbringing.

"Hip hop came from poverty," says Gritie. "It's a part of the community, from here on up to Mos Def and Talib Kweli and the Roots and Jay-Z and Nas, you know?"

"It's part of our upbringing, too," adds Maverick. "Our grandmother instilled the value in us that, if you can do something for somebody that needs it, then do it. Don't wait around for someone to ask you to do something; just go and do it. We're not big stars by any stretch, but if we can take the little influence we have with our music and actually bring people to the event where they can see a hip-hop showcase, and know that 50 per cent of the door is going to a good cause, then that's it—that's what we do." ☐

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music notes

BY PHIL DUPERRON
AND ROSS MOROZ

Something from Nothing

Careworn • With Abandon All Hope • Seedy's • Sat, Mar 26 Over the course of their near-decade on Edmonton's music scene, Careworn has recorded a couple of EPs, toured extensively, opened for Hot Water Music and were even voted "Edmonton's Best Band" in a semi-formal poll a few years back. But don't feel bad if you're currently scratching your head,

wondering why you've never heard of this apparently dynamic local act: perhaps it would help to know that for most of their career, the band went by their original name, Nothing at All. And while the change in monikers may be initially confusing, the band insists that it was time to change it up a bit.

"We were due for a new name; it's just not the same band anymore," explains drummer Matthew Morin, who joined the band less than two years ago. "That name [Nothing at All] has referred to so many different line-ups, and it's slowly mutated into what it is today."

After enduring a seemingly infinite number of membership changes over the years (when a local musician mentions that they once played in Nothing at All, the typical response is "Well, who hasn't?"), Careworn feel like they've finally cemented their roster. "I think the current lineup is definitely the best it's ever been," Morin enthuses. "Everyone in the band has

their head on straight, and we're all really tight."

Having being around for what almost amounts to an eternity in the context of the local music scene, it would be entirely appropriate for the members of Careworn to have become slightly jaded by the machinations of the music business, and to some extent the wear and tear of being an independent band has started to catch up with the group. "The business side is rewarding but frustrating," admits Morin. "Booking a tour is really a pain. It's tough to rely on anyone; when you plan to go to a new town, you basically trust some voice on the phone." (The band has seen several of their hall shows get re-booked or fall through entirely.)

Still, Careworn remains optimistic about the future, planning an upcoming Eastern Canadian swing to promote their new full-length recording *How Cunning These Blue Skies*. "Other bands I've been in, we've always wait-

Thursday March 24
Anarchy Camp Fundraiser
Chick Maggot
Death Hammer
and More Bad News \$5

Friday March 25
OSDA Industries presents
Decree (Frontline Assemblies Chris Peterson)
Moonitor (Satanic Rap Band of Ed)
Coded and DJ Dervish \$17.50

Saturday March 26
the return of
Careworn with Abandon All Hope \$7

Thursday March 31
bramwell & the left overs cd release
with we are the news
and chloe albert

Friday April 1
all vinyl dance party/
customer appreciation night
cheap drinks 10:00pm

Saturday April 2
field and stream
colony's vailhailen \$7
and ii smokey

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ed for stuff to come to us," Morin says. "With Careworn, we still have a lot of work ahead of us, but we know what we have to do." (RM)

Letover Stew

Stew Kirkwood CD release • With Devilsplender and Deon Blyan • Sideltrack Café • Wed, Mar 30 During the latter half of the '90s, one of the Edmonton's best-known local groups was Welcome, a catchy, eclectic rock act who had shared the stage with groups like Wide Mouth Mason and Everclear. After calling it quits in 2002, the band's members grew up and got on with their now-adult lives, devoting their attention to things like jobs, wives and kids. And although frontman Stew Kirkwood has the job, the wife and the kid to keep him busy, he never lost his love for songwriting and performing; this Wednesday, Kirkwood will release his first solo album, a disc featuring tracks Kirkwood has been working on since the end of Welcome.

"I had the luxury of recording whenever I wanted to," explains Kirkwood, who produced and recorded the album himself at Sound Extractor, the west-end recording studio he owns and operates.

Besides the easy access to equipment and studio time, Kirkwood credits his day job at the studio with helping his music in less obvious ways. "If I hear something that I like," he says, "I sort of make a note of it and I'll maybe use the idea in a different context. That's one of the benefits of listening to music all day. It definitely helps with arrangement."

As for the songwriting part of the process, Kirkwood acknowledges that, having just entered his 30s and with a new wife and new baby in tow, the thematic elements of his songs have become a lot more mellow and less abstract than they used to be. "I stopped fighting with songs to make them be about what I wanted them to be about," he explains. "The album is basically about a relationship. I've always tried to shy away from writing about the really universal topics like that in the past, but after two albums with Welcome, it's hard to avoid clichés as much, so I sort of let it go."

Asked whether he expects his new offering to be as well-received as Welcome's two albums were nearly a decade ago, Kirkwood jokingly insists that his new motto is "low expectations, low disappointment," although he does anticipate the disc selling briskly, if for no other reason than the price. "They're only five bucks, since I don't want them to be holding up my couch in a year," Kirkwood laughs. "I figure people can afford one less CD." (RM)

Red ink

Red Tide • With Dead Jesus • Charlie Room • Fri, Mar 25 (all dates) Ever since local extreme-metal band Red Tide went to Montreal for a big metal fest in 2003, everything has been falling into place for them. Impressed by the band's performance and their self-financed debut disc, Newkust Records approached them



Tolan McNeil and Dave Lang with the Spread Eagles • Sideltrack Café • Tue, Mar 22 • **revue** For years, Victoria's Tolan McNeil and Regina's Dave Lang have been producing and recording. Now, it's their talent. But both of them are also killer songwriters in their own right, and it was a real treat to see them slapping down their brand of western Canadian rock—equal parts honkytonk, blues and burlesque, cinematic country. As the band switched up guitar/songing duties after one set, the crowd got two distinct types for the price of one, with the wild drumming talents of "the Grosse" holding it all together. Unfortunately, with winter's last frost blast turning the streets into rivers of snowy sludge, the only people brave enough to come check out the action were musicians; all of whom have probably shared a stage with these guys at one point or another. (PD)

about a distribution deal for their followup album, *Para Bellum*; soon the talks expanded and Neoblast had signed a deal to put out the album, provided Red Tide covered the recording costs.

But after more than a year of working on the artwork and completing the recording, disaster struck. "Two weeks before our release I got an e-mail from them saying they were closing their doors," says guitarist Brad Dunn. "So we're left high and dry, a year and a half down the tube, but we're not gonna dwell on that. We're just gonna keep moving forward."

Not all was lost, however, since the band still has the rights to the completed EP—now all they need is a label to put it out. Because metal is such a niche market these days, Dunn says they will exhaust all possibilities before they resort to putting the disc out themselves. "We did that with our first disc," he explains, "and we managed to sell over 1,000 copies of it. But with the second one, it's not so much that we can't do it ourselves but getting distribution through a label is way better 'cause then we could market it better. We need someone who can help push us, because on the local level we've done pretty much all we can do. We've established a good fanbase, played a ton of shows—we have good crowds here—but now it's getting our name out more nationally and internationally." (PD)

Music on demand

Decree • With Moonitor, Coded and DJ Dervish • Seedy's • Fri, Mar 25 With nearly a decade of experience and two albums (including last

year's *Moment of Silence*) under their collective belt, Vancouver's dark industrial trio Decree is coming to Edmonton to perform its first live show. It's flattering and all, but you do kind of have to ask: why Edmonton?

"I want to be able to really loosen up and not worry about who's there," says percussionist/programmer Chris Peterson. "To just get away from everything and only focus on the show is hugely important for us, and I thought with a hometown gig, there'd be way too many distractions. This is our most important show, because if this one goes the way we want it to go, we'll be able to do a whole bunch more from there."

Peterson has always loved hard-edged industrial and Decree is a worthy outlet for his passion. Building and destroying his own contraptions in the studio while capturing their dying breaths for samples and loops, he creates dark sonic landscapes of organic and electronic sounds. "From where I started," he says, "it was tape loops, guitar effects pedals, reel-to-reel and spring reverbs—whatever you could get your hands on. You'd do a record with glue and tape if you had to. So coming from there and being in stride with the technology, I'm never going to lose that sense of bringing the outside world into this machine instead of running some program that's got 50 synths and a drum machine built right in and everybody else has the same sound. I'd be embarrassed to do that. I find this more artistic and individual."

"And it's working, as far as I can tell," he continues. "It's like really raw and just stripped down—right in your face. Almost kind of punk rock in a way, because it's really gritty." (PD)



NEW CITY

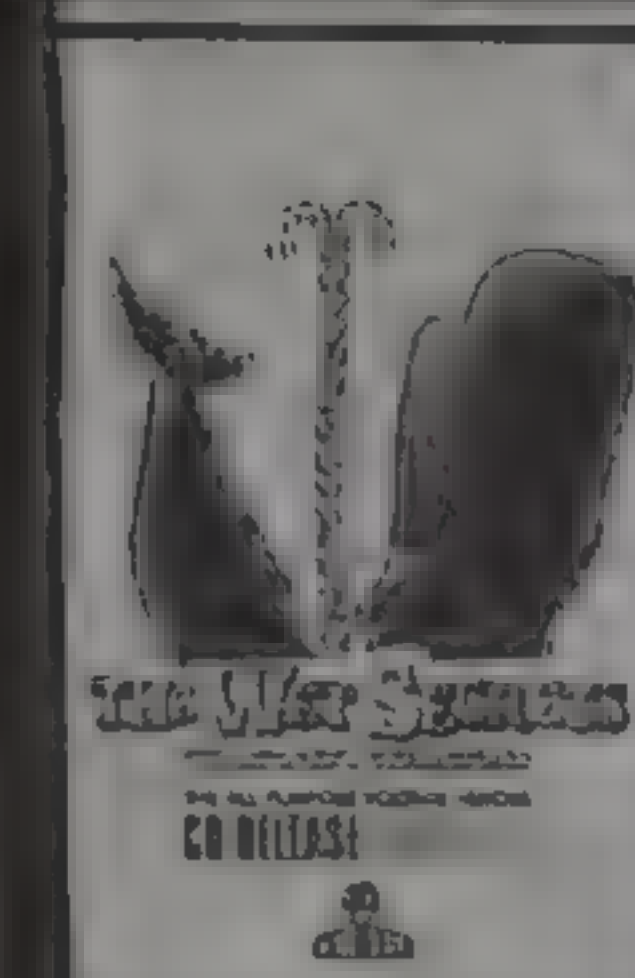
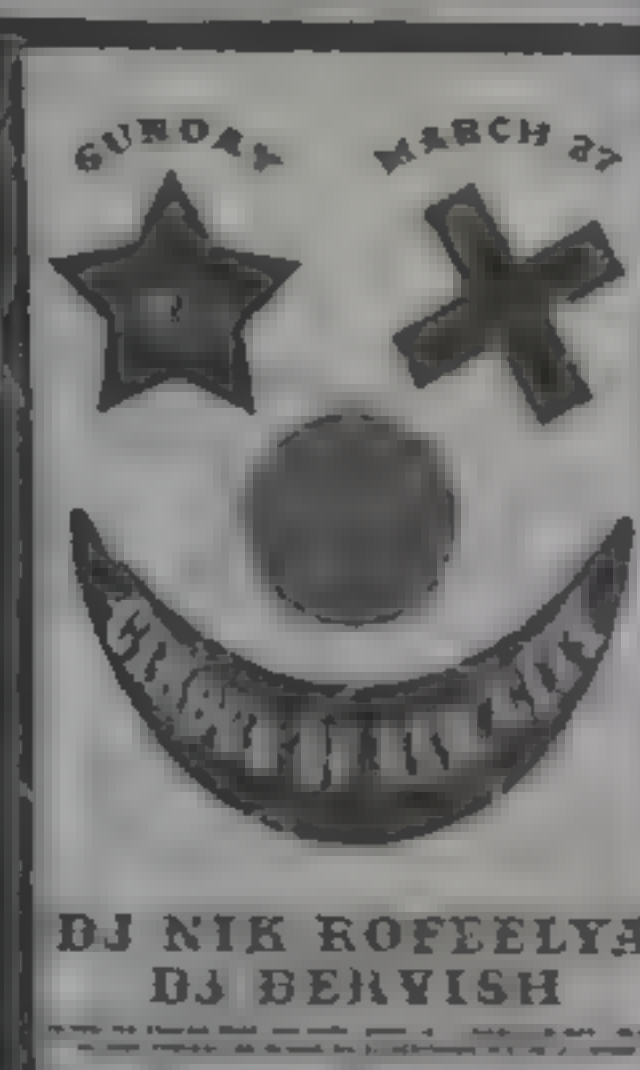
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Tues April 19: Fat Possum Recording Artists THREE SHAMS w/ guests
Thurs. April 14: FLUFFGIRL BURLESQUE ROADSHOW: LES MOBS
SUNDAY MAY 8TH: MAGNOLIA ELECTRIC CO.: FIELD AND STREAM
Thurs. May 12th: UK Punk Legends THE VIBRATORS w/ guests

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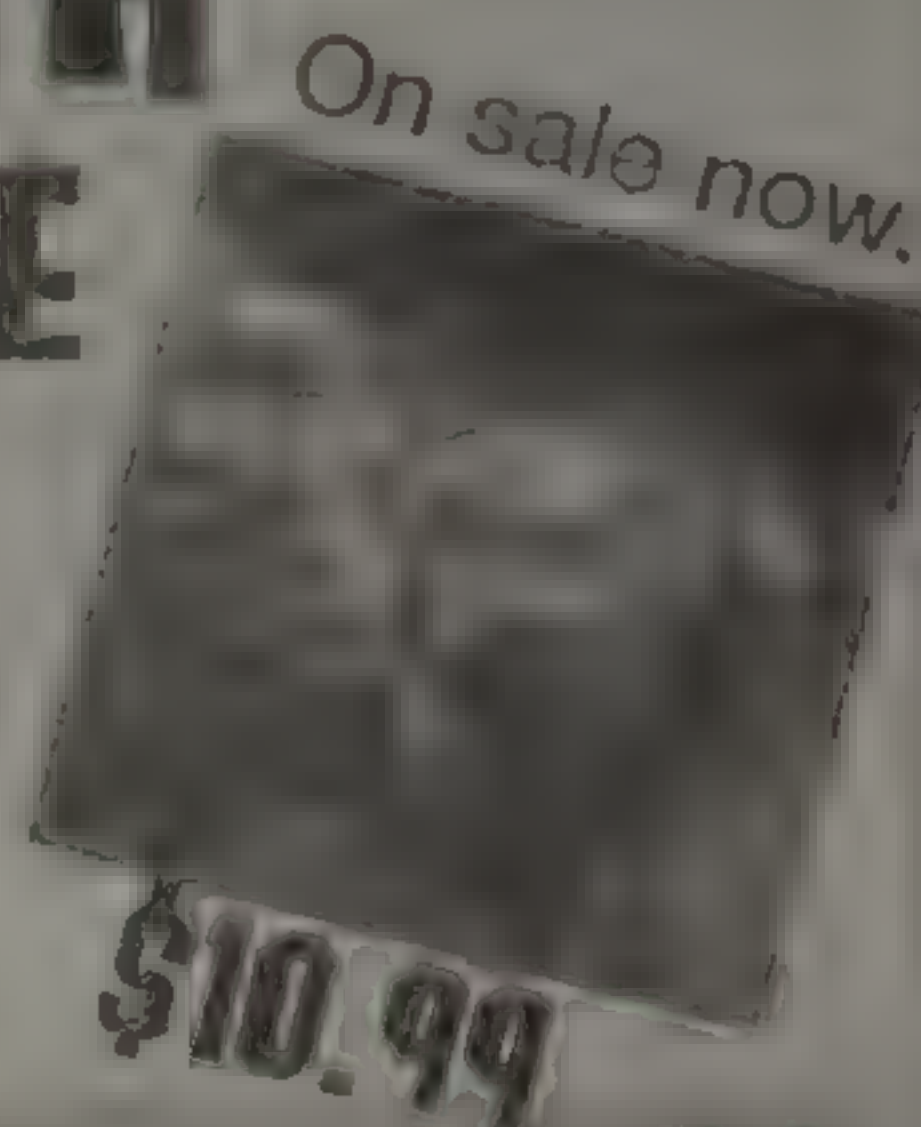
Your Music Destination

FOR THE WEEK ENDING MAR 24, 2005

1. Jack Johnson - In Between Dreams (brushfire)
2. Mars Volta - Frances The Mute (universal)
3. Ian Tyson - Songs From The Gravel Road (stony plain)
4. Choke - Slow Fade or: How I learned To Question Infinity (smallman)
5. Thievery Corporation - The Cosmic Game (esl)
6. Mary Gauthier - Mercy Now (lost highway)
7. Iron & Wine - Women King (sub pop)
8. Doves - Some Cities (emi)
9. Bright Eyes - Digital Ash In A Digital Um (saddle creek)
10. Bright Eyes - I'm Wide Awake It's Morning (saddle creek)
11. LCD Soundsystem - LCD Soundsystem (dfa)
12. Colin Linden - Southern Jumbo (true north)
13. And You'll Know Us By The Trail Of Dead - Worlds Apart (interscope)
14. Sandro Dominelli - Meet Me In The Ally (second story)
15. Kings Of Leon - Aha Shake Heartbreak (rca)
16. Strapping Young Lad - Alien (century media)
17. One Be Lo - s.o.n.o.g.r.a.m. (fat beats)
18. Arcade Fire - Funeral (merge)
19. The Kills - No Wow (rough trade)
20. Buena Vista Social Club - Manuel Guajiro Mirabal (nonesuch)
21. Wumpscut - Blondi (metropolis)
22. Boom Bip - Blue Eyed In The Red Room (lex)
23. Bloc Party - Silent Alarm (vice)
24. Smoke Or Fire - Above The City (fat)
25. Dave Brubeck - Time Out (columbia)
26. The Postal Service - We Will Become Silhouettes (sub pop)
27. The Chemical Brothers - Push The Button (virgin)
28. Billy Cowsell - Live From The Crystal Ballroom (indelible)
29. As I Lay Dying - Frail Words Collapse (metal blade)
30. Madeleine Peyroux - Careless Love (rounder)

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THU LIVE MUSIC

ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL Derina

BACKDRAUGHT PUB Open stage

BACKSTAGE TRAP AND GRILL Open stage jam; 8pm-midnight

BLUES ON WHYTE Tacoy Ride

CARGO AND JAMES TEA SHOPPE Open stage hosted by Ron Taylor; 7:30-10pm

CASINO YELLOWHEAD Gypsy and the Rose (pop/country)

CEILI'S Screech; 9pm

CHRISTOPHER'S PARTY PUB Open stage hosted by Alberta Crude; 6-10pm

DUKE OF ARGYLL Todd Reynolds; 8pm-1am

DUSTER'S PUB Jam hosted by Brian Petch

FOUR ROOMS Marco Claveria

FOX Amara, Cooper's Cobras, Burnd; 7pm (door), 9pm (bands); DJ at midnight

GRINDER Open stage hosted by Chilli-D-Fiddy; 9-12pm

J AND R BAR AND GRILL Open stage with The Poster Boys (pop/rock/blues); 8:30pm-12:30am

J.J.'S PUB Blissin (rock)

JEKYLL AND HYDE PUB Headwind '60s/'70s pop/rock; no cover

NEWCASTLE PUB Jim Grey Benefit with guest; 9pm

NEW CITY LIKWID LOUNGE The Wet Secrets (CD release party), All Purpose Voltage Heroes, Frosted Tipz, Testa Clesberg with DJ Tash; \$5

SEEDY'S Chick Maggot, Death Hammer, More Bad News; \$5

SIDETRACK CAFE Retrohit; 8pm; \$8 (adv)/\$10 (door)

URBAN LOUNGE Souljahyah; \$5

DJS

ARMOURY Vintage Thursdays, retro rock, dance and old school hip hop

BACKROOM VODKA BAR Animation Station: trip hop, drum 'n' bass with MC Deadly, Gundam, Dale Force

BILLY BOB'S LOUNGE Escapade Entertainment

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE Thump: Intronic with the DDK Soundsystem

BUDDY'S NIGHTCLUB DJ Squiggles

ESCAPE ULTRA LOUNGE Thursday Ladies Night: Top 40, R&B, retro with Urban Metropolis

FILTHY McNASTY'S Punk Rock Bingo with DJ S.W.A.G.

GAS PUMP Ladies Nite: Top 40/dance with DJ Christian

GUILTY MARTINI DJ Jeff

LONGRIDERS Hot Latin Nights; free dance lessons 8-9:30pm

NEW CITY LIKWID LOUNGE Rub A Dub Thursdays: Reggae, ska, dub with Jebus and His Apostles

NEW CITY SUBURBS Progress: electro/new wave with DJ Miss Mannered and guests; no minors

POWER PLANT Ship Night for resident students

RED STAR Underground Hip Hop Night: with DJ Mumps, DJ Dusty Crates

RENDEZVOUS Metal Night with DJ McNasty

THE ROOST Rotating shows: Sticky's open stage and the Weakest Link game with DJ Jazzy second and last Thursday; \$1 (member)/\$4 (non-member)

RUM JUNGLE Rewind: R&B, hip hop, reggae with Harman B, old school beats with DJ Kwake, hosted by Kwame; \$8 (adv); tickets available at Underground, Soular (WEM), Method (Whyte Ave), Rum Jungle

SAVOY Funk and downtempo with Ben Jamin

SEEDY'S DJ night

STANDARD Limited Edition Thursdays Feat: with DJs

STOLLI'S ON WHYTE Top 40 dance, R&B

VELVET LOUNGE Urban Substance: hip hop/R&B end of exams jam with Spincycle, Invoiceable, J-Money, Sean B

VICTORY LOUNGE NRMLS WLCM: Electro synth pop hip hop with DJ Nik7, DJ David Stone, guests; no cover

WUNDERBAR HOF BRAUHAUS DJs Wunderbar Hofbrauhaus: Punk with Robin Schreffel

FRI LIVE MUSIC

ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL Acoustholics

BLUES ON WHYTE Tacoy Ride

CASINO YELLOWHEAD Gypsy and the Rose (pop/country)

CEILI'S The Kick It Bros; 9pm

DUKE OF ARGYLL Todd Reynolds; 8pm-1am

FOUR ROOMS Kelly Alanna

LEGENDS PUB The Jay Murphy Band

PEPPERS Cinch; no cover

RED'S David Wilcox, Rubber Band; no minors; 7pm

SEEDY'S Decree, Moonitor, Coded, DJ Dervish

SHARK TANK Wednesday Night Heroes, The Franklins, The Intensives, Self Rule; 7pm (door); \$5

SIDETRACK CAFE The Swiftys (3rd anniversary party), Budd Pluggst and Tex-Ass Mikey, Romi Mayes; 8pm; \$10 (door)

STARLITE ROOM Dead Jesus, Red Tide, Spawned by Rot; all ages event; 7pm (door), 8pm (show); tickets available at door

UNION HALL Ozzy Osmonds; 9pm (door)

UNCLE GLENN'S Mr. Lucky (blues/roots); 9:30pm-1:30am; no cover

URBAN LOUNGE Mourning Wood; \$5

VICTORY LOUNGE Vindictive Metal: Hosted by The Vindictive Bastard, Spawned by Rot (midnight)

WOODCROFT HALL

Uptown Folk Club open stage; 7pm (sign-up)/7:30pm (music); free (member)/\$5 (non-members)

CLASSICAL

WINSPEAR CENTRE Mozart's Requiem: presented by Pro Coro Canada, Richard Sparks (conductor); 7:30pm; \$26 (adult, orchestra level)/\$29 (adult, terrace)/\$33 (adult, dress circle)/\$23 (student/senior, orchestra level)/\$26 (student/senior, terrace)/\$29 (student/senior, dress circle); tickets available at the Winspear box office 428-1414

DJS

ARMOURY Fishbone Fridays: Top 40 downstairs/retro 80 upstairs

BOOTS Retro Disco: retro dance

BUDDY'S NIGHTCLUB Dance party with DJ Alvaro

DECADANCE Ladies Night: Deep sexy funky beats with DJ Smooov and guests; no cover

DEWEY'S LOUNGE Outrageous Fridays: Hip-hop/urban with Jsmilz

ESCAPE ULTRA LOUNGE With Urban Metropolis

GAS PUMP Top 40/dance with DJ Christian

HALO Mod Club: '60s with DJ Blue Jay, DJ Trav VD; \$5

NEW CITY LIKWID LOUNGE Your Weekly AA Meeting: with Anarchy Adam and Jebus

NEW CITY SUBURBS

Trashetaria: Dogbeat, yipsy-core, hairhop with Micropulse and Miss Mannered

ONE ON WHYTE Retro, top 40, R&B with DJ Crownroyal

POWER PLANT Crush On Top 40 with DJ Redpoint

RATT Immediate Gratification Fridays: with DJ Kung Fu Grip

THE ROOST Upstairs: Euro Blitz: best new European music with DJ Outtawak Downstairs: DJ

Jazzy; \$4 (member)/\$6 (non-member)

RUM JUNGLE Peoples DJ Spinning

SAVOY DJ Busy B; no cover

STANDARD All New 6107 Fridays: Hosted by Harman B and DJ Kwake, live to air

STONEHOUSE PUB Top 40 with DJ Chad

VICTORY LOUNGE Vindictive Metal Fridays: Hosted by The Vindictive Bastard and guests

SAT LIVE MUSIC

ALLEGRO ITALIAN KITCHEN Terry Jordan (jazz piano); 7-10pm

ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL Acoustholics

BACKDRAUGHT PUB Best of the Backdraught final showcase; 9pm

BELLA BEANS COFFEE CAFE Acoustic open stage; 7:30-10pm

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE Romi Mayes; 4-6pm; no cover

BLUES ON WHYTE Tacoy Ride

BOBBE BATH COMMUNITY HALL Andrea House, Kevin Cook, Terry Morrison, Swing Manouche, The Cam Neufeld Trio, John Henry; 7pm (door), 8pm (music); \$12 (adv)/\$15 (door); tickets available at Alfie Myhre's, Blackbyrd

BO'S BAR AND GRILL Blue Gator; 8pm; no cover

CASINO YELLOWHEAD Gypsy and the Rose (pop/country)

DRUID (JASPER AVENUE) Stewart Bendall; 4-7pm

DUKE OF ARGYLL Todd Reynolds; 8pm-1am

FESTIVAL PLACE Northern Pikes; 7:30 pm; \$24 (cabaret)/\$22 (theatre seating); tickets available at Festival Place box office, TicketMaster

FOUR ROOMS Kelly Alanna

JEFFREYS CAFE AND WINE BAR Gordie Matthews and Jamie Calan (blues); 7:30pm; \$5

LEGENDS PUB The Jay Murphy Band

MEGATUNES Careworn with A Band In All Hope; all ages; 3pm; no cover

NEWCASTLE PUB Train Wreck (classic rock); 9:30pm

PEPPERS Cinch; no cover

RED'S Smooth Ride, Crisnd; no minors; 8pm (door), 10pm (show); \$4

SEEDY'S Careworn, A Band In All Hope; \$7

SHARK TANK Wednesday Night Heroes, E-Town Beatdown, Nervous Breakdown; 7pm (door); \$5

SIDETRACK CAFE Melissa Majeau and the Muse, The Silver Spurs, Cam Penner

and the Gravel Road; 8pm, \$7 (door)

STARLITE ROOM Our Mercury, Faunts, The Uncas Eshod Ibn Wyza with DJ Weez-L, Mark Birtles Project, Sleeping Girl; all ages early show; 4pm (door); \$10, tickets available at FS (WEM), Victory, Blackbyrd, Megatunes, Listen

UNCLE GLENN'S Mr. Lucky (blues/roots); 9:30pm-1:30am; no cover

URBAN LOUNGE Mourning Wood; \$5

VICTORY LOUNGE i.am.damo.suzuki; with DJs Mittens and Bob Crane, Shuyler Jansen's Hobotron, Escalator; no minors; 8pm (door); \$8

YARDBIRD SUITE The Dave Babcock Group; 8pm (door), 9pm (show); \$7 (member)/\$11 (guest), tickets available at TicketMaster

DJS

BILLY BOB'S LOUNGE DJ Escapade Entertainment

BOOTS Flashback Saturdays: retro dance, house with Demick

BUDDY'S NIGHTCLUB DJ Arrowchaser

DECADANCE Static: House with Lo and Tomek

ESCAPE ULTRA LOUNGE Urban Metropolis

GAS PUMP Top 40/dance with DJ Christian

HALO Those Who Know House with DJ Jr. Brown, guests; no cover

IRON HORSE Urban dance party with DJ 420

NEW CITY LIKWID LOUNGE Ass Shakin' Funk with Cool Curt and Breakfluid

NEW CITY SUBURBS Punk/alt/pop/dance with Blue Jay and Nikrofeelya

ONE ON WHYTE Music 4 The Masses: Retro, top 40, R&B with DJ Crownroyal

RED STAR Indie rock, hip hop, rock, Brit pop with 5 Master F

THE ROOST Upstairs: Monthly theme parties, new music with DJ Jazzy

Downstairs: Retro music with DJ Dan and Mike; \$4 (member)/\$6 (non-member)

RUM JUNGLE Rum Jungle legendary Saturdays: Hip Hop, Old School and R&B

STANDARD Live to Air 96X

STONEHOUSE PUB Top 40 with DJ Chad

SUN LIVE MUSIC

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE Funky jazz hosted by Rubim Metha, Lane Arendt and guests; no cover

BLIND PIG PUB AND GRILL Sunday jam with Camen Cook



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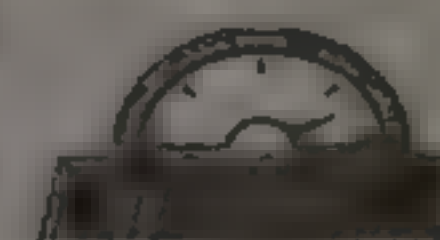
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Fast friends

Success has come quickly to Edmonton alt-country phenoms the Swiftys

By MIKE LAROCQUE

Even in Alberta, country music can be a tough sell—or at least when it comes to local country, that is. Sure, the occasional cowboy hat will make a public appearance in this fair city, and heck, we're about as red-neck as a city can get in Canada, but it seems the only way to make country music fit into the local scene is to call it "alt-country," a label generally reserved for music that isn't quite old-time western, but isn't quite anything else either.

Well, thank God for the Swiftys. Edmonton's own country music phenomenon has revived an unapologetic brand of traditional country music that is often absent from local venues. In the three short years they've been together, the trio—lead vocalist Shawn "Swiftly" Jonasson, bass player Jody Johnson and drummer Grant Stovel—has made a name for itself across the continent, thanks to a sound that is classic but rocked-up enough to make local fans happy. Still, fixing a conventional label on the band is no easy feat.

"It's a bit of a catchall phrase, but if people want to refer to us as alt-country, we're fine with it," says Stovel. "We don't shun any sort of label, but we're really more interested in how people react to the music. We've played in places that were very country, very rural, and thought of us as an alternative-rock band. Then we go play huge festivals and they see us as a straight-up traditional country band. It just seems to come out as country music that sometimes has a rocked-up edge. We really love the outlaw music of the '60s and '70s, but at the same time we're definitely not terribly interested in being a retro act. That's why we came up with the term 'modern

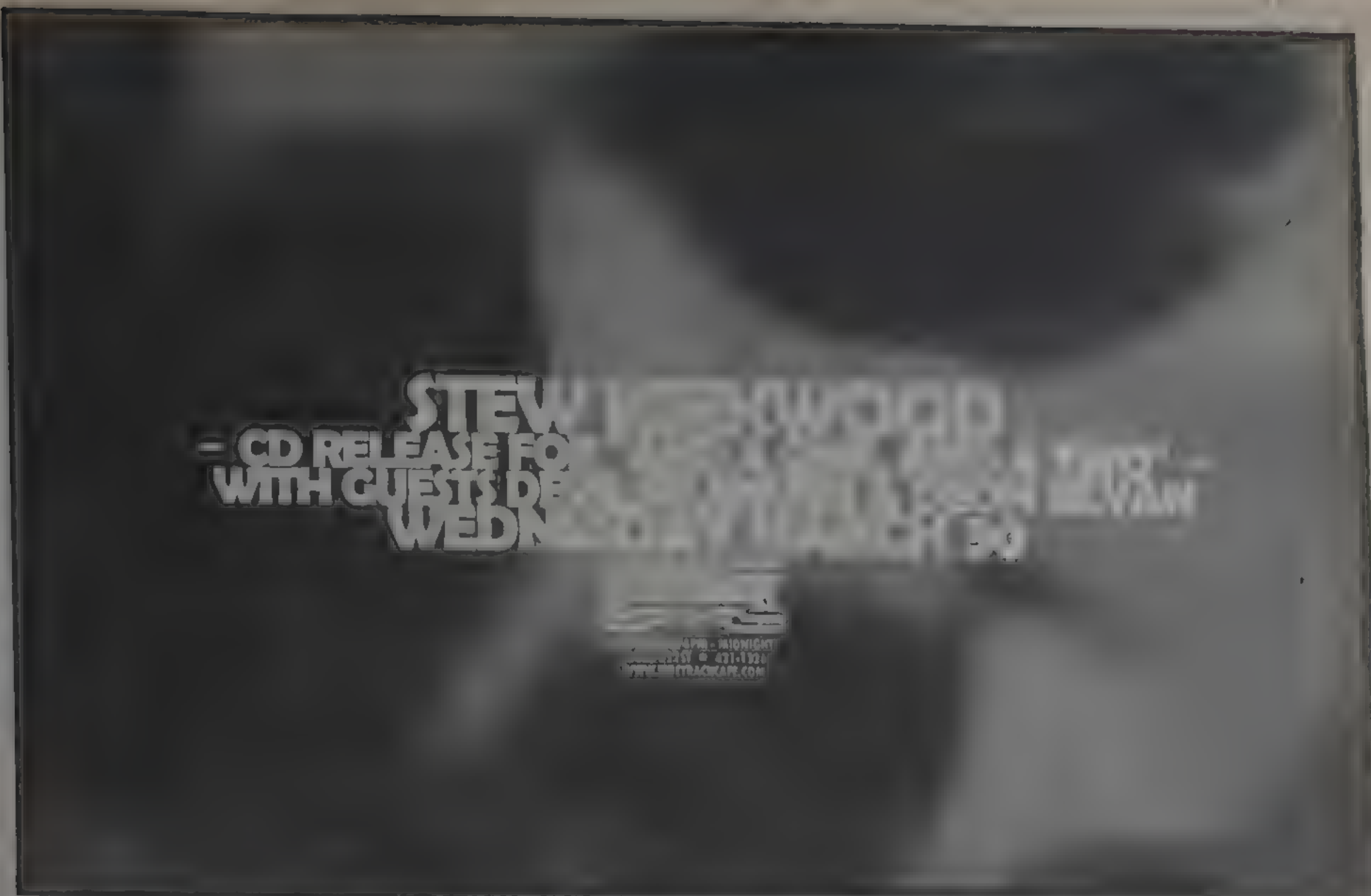
outlaws' to describe us and our music. It seems to sum it all up."

WHATEVER YOU WANT to call it, the band is doing something right. Despite going it independently for most of their existence, the band has managed to release a self-titled record, earn the financial support of Calgary-based record label Saved by Radio and land a number of high-profile gigs, most notably a spot at this year's South by Southwest music festival in Austin, Texas. "To tell you the truth, we're not looking for a huge amount of assistance, but magically it seems to have come our way," laughs Stovel. "It's all given us a chance to rub up with the capital-M Music Industry, and it's quite a different world that

we don't feel terribly comfortable in. We would love to travel the world and make records for as long as we possibly can, but we've also heard the horror stories of bands who sell a ton of records on a label but end up owing the company money. On the one side, we are philosophically attached to the idea of staying close to our roots and keeping it small, but at the same time it seems like that might be the most sensible idea from a bottom-line point of view, too."

With a string of shows lined up across Canada and a new album in the works, it seems like the Swiftys' "hard-working band makes good" story has all the makings of a good country song itself. But Stovel says the band still faces an uphill fight to stay popular in an industry where country doesn't necessarily rake in the big bucks. "We're certain that we're not going to be media darlings or have our faces flashed all over magazines," he says, "but there's a pretty good chance that 30 years from now we're going to be doing the same thing that we're doing now. We're not concerned with how difficult it may be to get things going, because we know we're going to be doing it regardless of the struggle." ♡

THE SWIFTYS' 3RD BIRTHDAY
With Budd Pluggst and Tex-Ass Mikey •
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Saturday, April 16th

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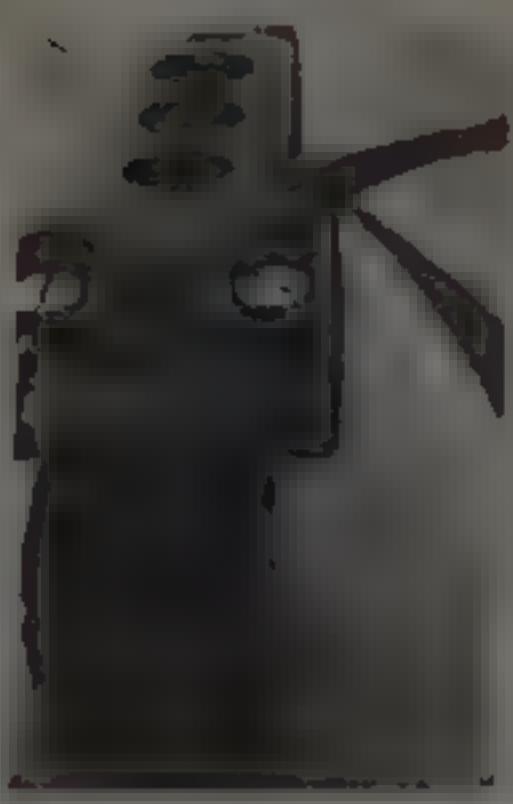
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The Myer Horowitz Theatre shows are ALL AGES.

MUSIC



bpm

By DAVID STONE

Bang a Tong

Everywhere else, it's as lovely outside as Jessica Alba, but here, man, the weather is about as insane as Robert Blake. But hey, it didn't stop many people from heading out to Escape last Sunday to check out the set spun by U.K. icon **Pete Tong**, though it's unfortunate that such a spectacular night of music had to be smeared by the violent actions of a lone thug.

While the night was wrapping up, some dude decided that since he wasn't going to be let into the club, he'd pull a gun and pop some shots outside. Happily, the police were able to track down suspects shortly afterward. I'm even happier that I'd gone home shortly before it all happened. I hope that this incident will be seen as an anomaly and doesn't make anyone think twice about going out to the clubs. That's not to say that we shouldn't be concerned about our safety, so the next time a bouncer

comes across a little gruff at the door, try to remember what they might have to deal with.

Most of the time, though, we clubbers would rather be lovers than fighters, right? We like to go out, hear some good tunes and head back to yours (or mine, doesn't matter) for some late-night chill. Tong's show on Sunday certainly filled the bill for a good night out, and tonight (Thursday) offers a few more pleasant diversions from the winter hell we apparently deserve to repeat.

First off, the Roost (10345-104 St) is presenting another night of heavy-duty beats with **Blue Skies**, featuring a host of locals like Nightcrawler, Andreas Benjamin, Philippe Lam, S@ and Sublime veteran Phenyx. Doors open at 8 p.m. If you're looking for a smaller vibe, come down to the Victory Lounge (10030-102 St, downstairs) for this week's edition of the electro-punk-funk night **NRMLS WLCM**, where host Nik 7 is letting yours truly get behind the decks and wreak havoc.

Things on the underground front are quiet until Saturday, when Y After-hours gets the suds up with another foam party on the main floor. The special treat will be downstairs, where a cadre of Edmonton's hardcore DJs will get together for a robot-themed bash called **Out of Space**. Lego, Pinkboots, Dreadnought and Redline will pack up their record boxes full of hardcore, gabber, techno and jungle for your high-pressure pleasure.

Sunday night has even more tension, when the thunder of techno starts rattling the system upstairs at Bar None (10550 Whyte Ave), where Tryptomene, Neal K and an armada of local up-and-comers are getting together for **I Love Techno**. The party is being thrown alongside the powers behind DriveMusic.ca, a local website dedicated to promoting Edmonton's diverse DJ scene. Sharing the decks will be Rob Allen, Mr. Anderson, Tech Driver and Dusty Grooves.

Speaking of Dusty Grooves, he's getting a chance to showcase his electro flavour with a new Monday night at New City (10081 Jasper Ave) called **Make It Mondays**. He's promising to have guests every week, but considering how well he smacked up the house when he opened for Tiga at the Starlite Room last November, Dusty could carry the entire evening quite well all by himself.

And what would a week out in Edmonton's clubs be without an appearance by a noted international DJ? Italian sensation **Benny Benassi**—the guy behind the über-hit "Satisfaction"—is returning to Edmonton after he blasted a packed Rum Jungle to bits last fall. This time, Benassi is headlining Off tha Hook in the intimate environment of DecaDance (10018-105 St) alongside Travis Mateeson, Dave Defkt and Philippe Lam. ☺

Listen to BPM with David Stone every Saturday at 6pm on CJSR-FM 88.5.

Joel Plaskett

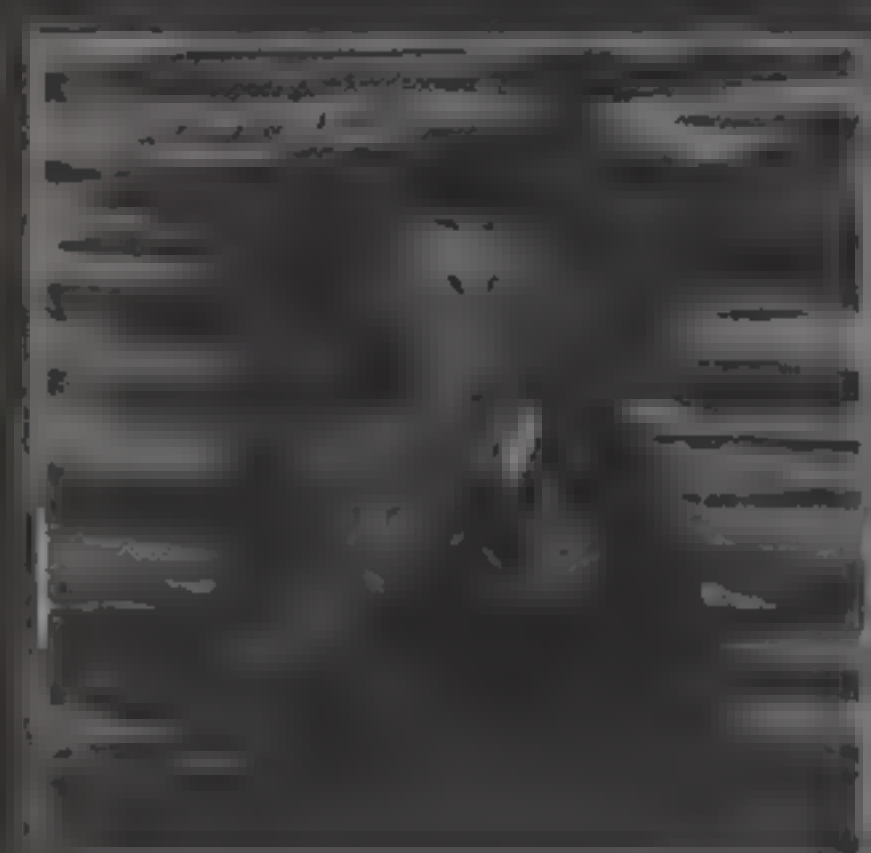
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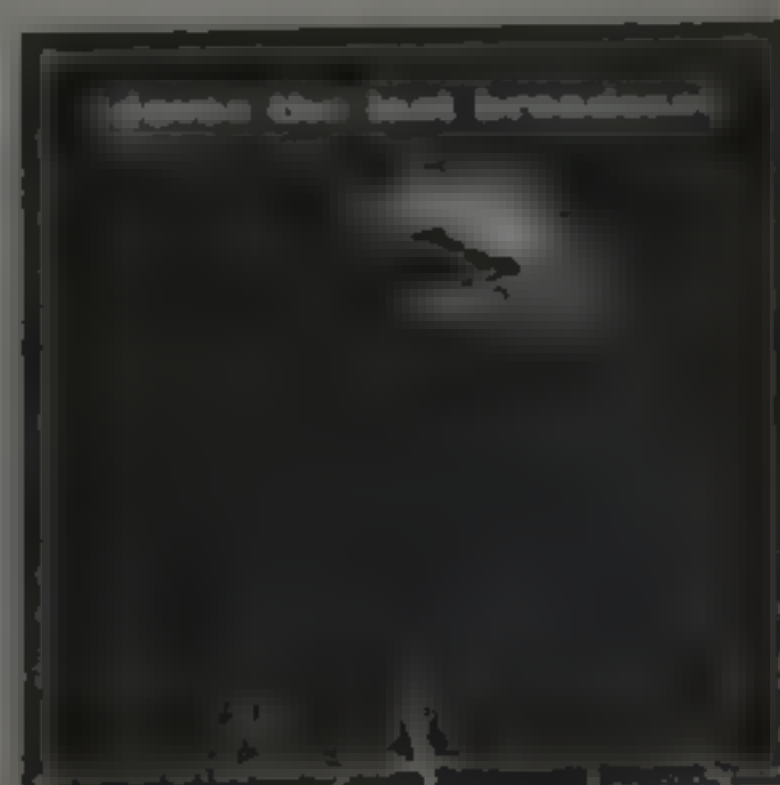
"With Some Cities, Doves come good on their early promise. The Storm opens with an electronically tinkered vocal and develops into the kind of atmospheric beauty that could soundtrack a million late night drives. This nocturnal claustrophobia dominates much of the record, before collapsing in on itself for the ethereal, and oddly serene, closing track Ambition." — **WORD**

"Could already be the best record of 2005." — **GQ** ("Essential Album")

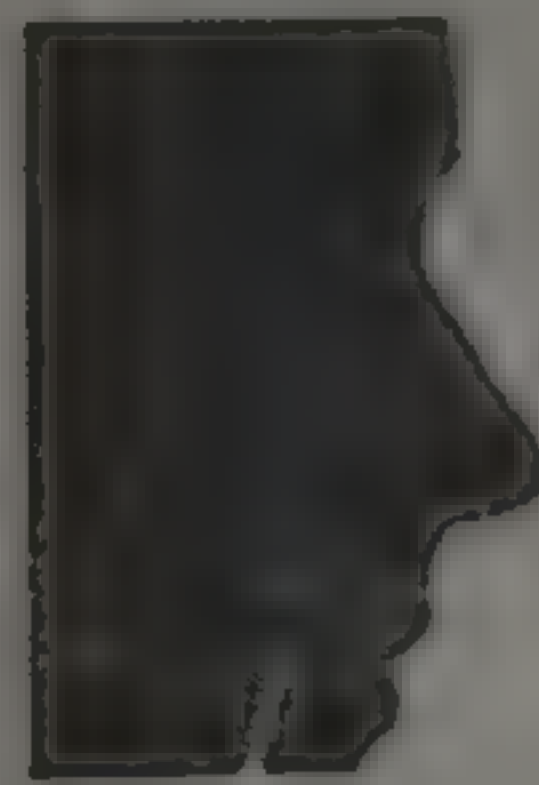
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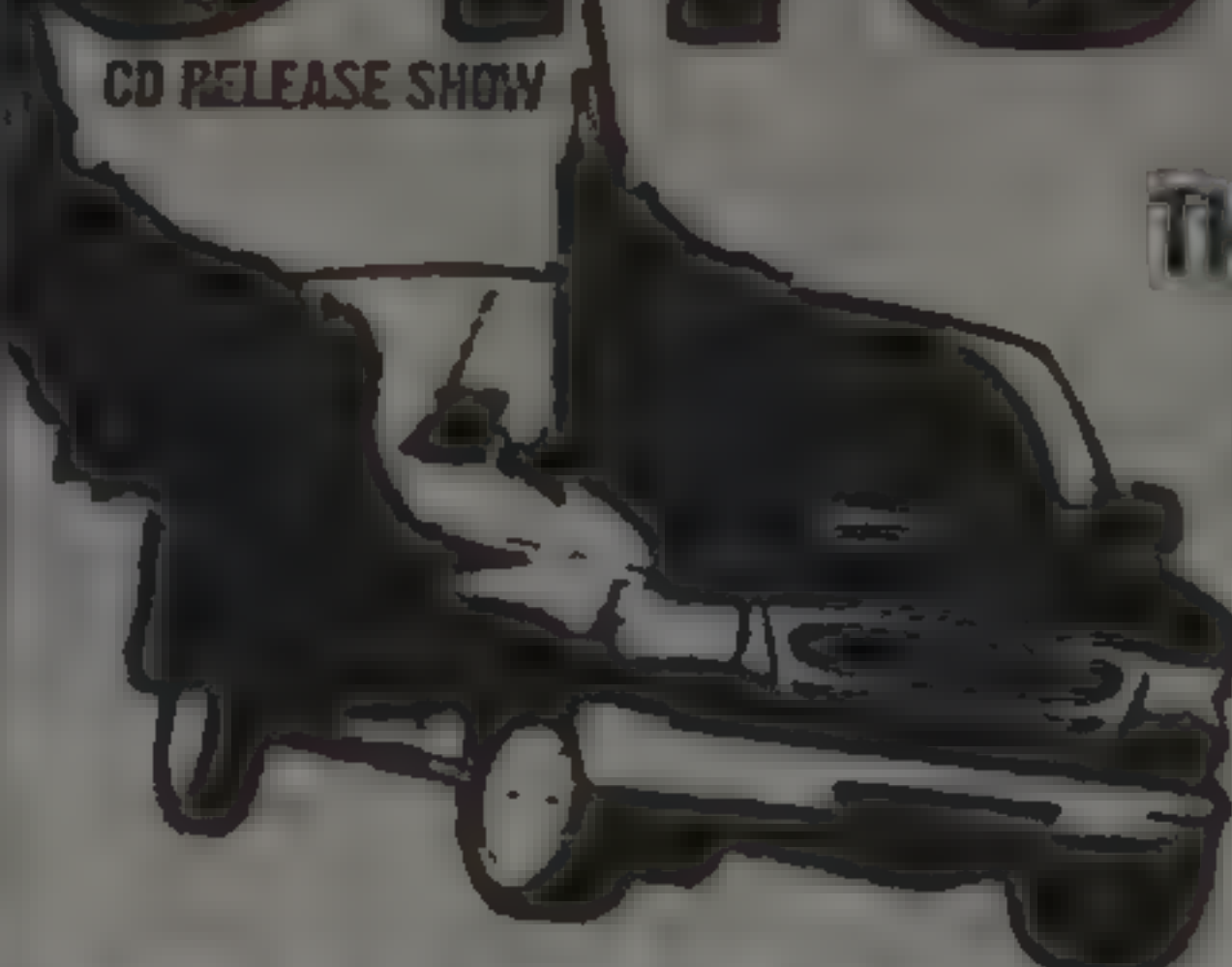
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VUEWEEKLY

26

MARCH 24-30, 2005

Pop goes the Wyza

Iconoclastic rappers Eshod Ibn Wyza land an unlikely berth at Much Does Edmonton

BY ROSS MOROZ

Flip on MuchMusic at almost any time of the day and you'll likely find yourself inundated with the trappings of what passes for hip-hop these days: machismo, aggression, bling and the obligatory pimp 'n' ho references. Sure, there are plenty of hip-hop groups that don't fit this stereotype, but good luck finding them on "the nation's music station." And bearing in mind the channel's affinity for uninspired corporate mall-rap, it's understandable that local underground rap outfit Eshod Ibn Wyza were a little surprised when they were asked to bring their bling-and ho-free show to Much Does Edmonton, the station's annual showcase of up-and-coming local talent.

"Whether we're trying to be or not, we're very different from the mainstream, what you typically see



on MuchMusic," says MC Maigan van der Giessen, a.k.a. Solar Warrior. While the group certainly welcomes the national exposure, van der Giessen does confess to feeling some ambivalence regarding the source of this attention.

"Whenever I watch MuchMusic I get kind of depressed, actually," she admits. "This is a really great opportunity for us, though, and we're just going to have some fun."

The pugnacious sneering and truculent posturing that dominates the mainstream makes it easy to forget that hip-hop can be really fun,

but Eshod Ibn Wyza have always

SEE NEXT PAGE

PREVIEW HIP HOP



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VUE WEEKLY



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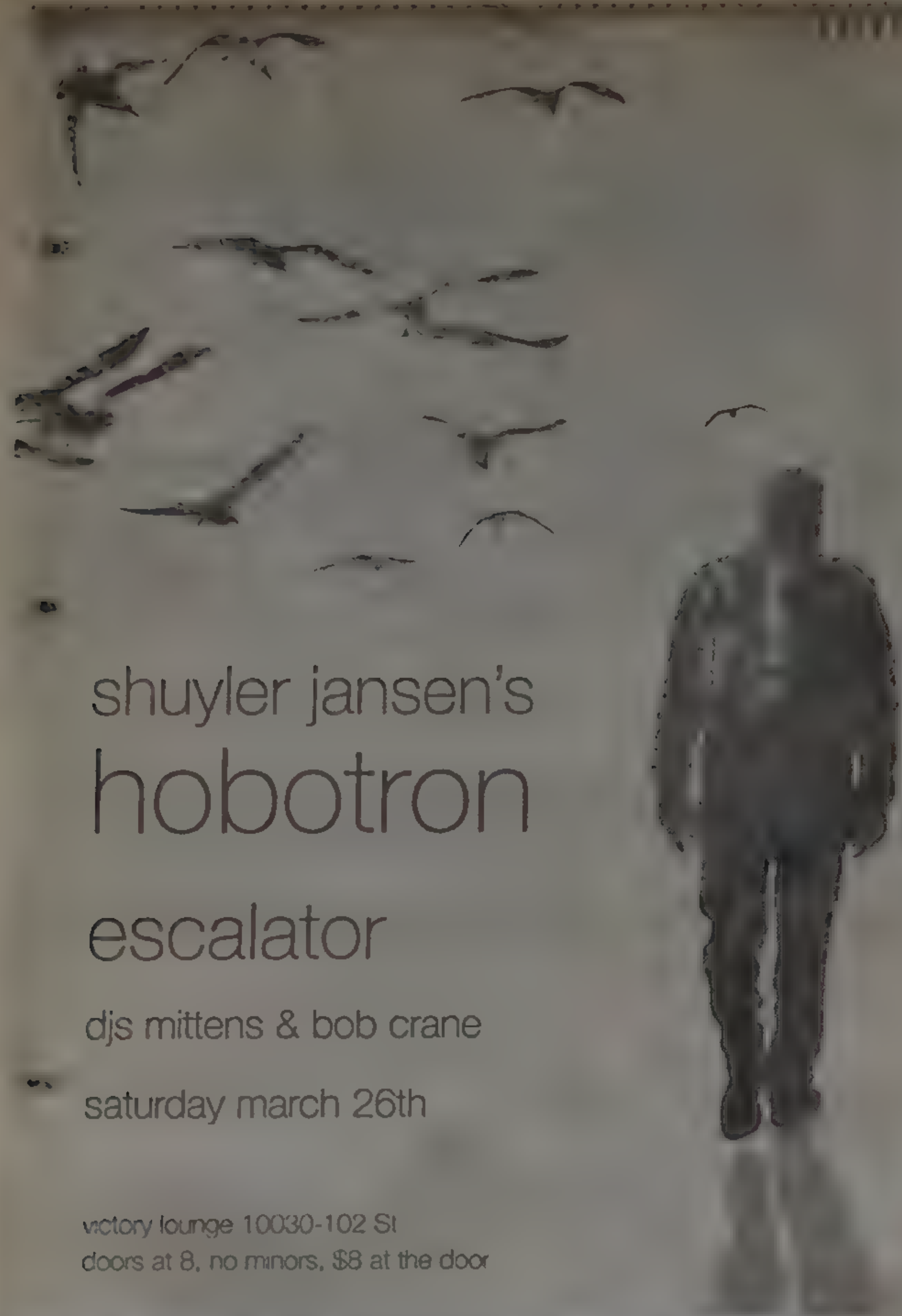
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Much Does Edmonton

Continued from previous page

rejected the industry's dominant attitudes. Along with fellow MCs Andre Johnstone (a.k.a. Hypolyte A), Louis Williams (a.k.a. Crow-Box One-String) and Karan Singh (a.k.a. Corvid Lorax), van der Giessen has tried to bring a more organic approach to the hip-hop formula, enlisting producer Marek Czuba (a.k.a. Madame Wang) and eschewing samples in favour of a backing band of live musicians like Joaqchim Newman, Rhys Khiron and Daniel Buxton (better known as Stompy, the moptopped, cowboy-booted Whyte Avenue busker). Eshod may have a suspiciously "crew"-sized number of members, but van der Giessen insists that the band is more of a collective than a posse—more Hidden Cameras than G-Unit.

"We're all pretty diverse in what we bring to it," she explains. "I do more of a melodic singing thing,

Andre does more of a spoken word thing, Karan is like our gangsta and Louis spits the crazy-fast, blow-your-mind rhymes."

WITH THEIR INTRICATE, unconventional arrangements and expertly choreographed delivery, Eshod Ibn Wyza give off the impression that they've been honing their act for ages. It's a bit of a shock, therefore, to realize that the group formed a scant 18 months ago in an almost comically haphazard way. "Louis was bugging our friend [local promoter] Eli Klein to book him a show," laughs van der Giessen, "but Eli said, 'Well, you don't really have a band right now.' So Louis ended up kind of pitching him this potential group and after Eli gave him a show, he just basically made a bunch of phone calls and got a bunch of people together."

From these humble beginnings, the group has quickly established themselves on the local music scene, whose diversity van der Giessen credits with much of her group's suc-

cess. "Edmonton is a perfect place for us to be, because it's one of the few places where you see subcultures crossing over," she enthuses. "You don't see punk rockers and hip-hopers hanging out in, say, Vancouver or Toronto the way you do here."

Even though Eshod Ibn Wyza is the only rap act in the mostly guitar-driven Much Does Edmonton lineup, van der Giessen insists that, if anything, she and her group actually feels more comfortable playing with rock acts than they do on a hip-hop bill. "There's a hip-hop scene here but we don't fit in to it," she says. "We chose purposely not to put ourselves into any category, so we feel like we can play a rock show or a hip-hop show and it always goes okay. Even if you're not into hip-hop, you might be into Eshod." ▽

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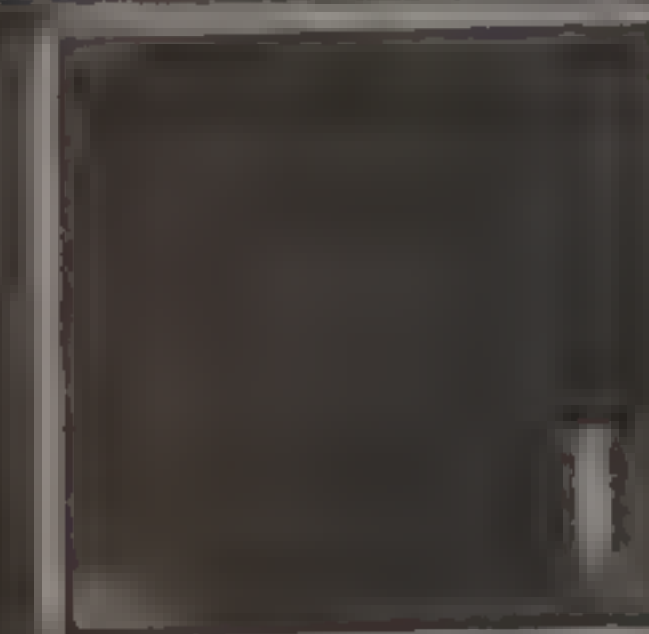
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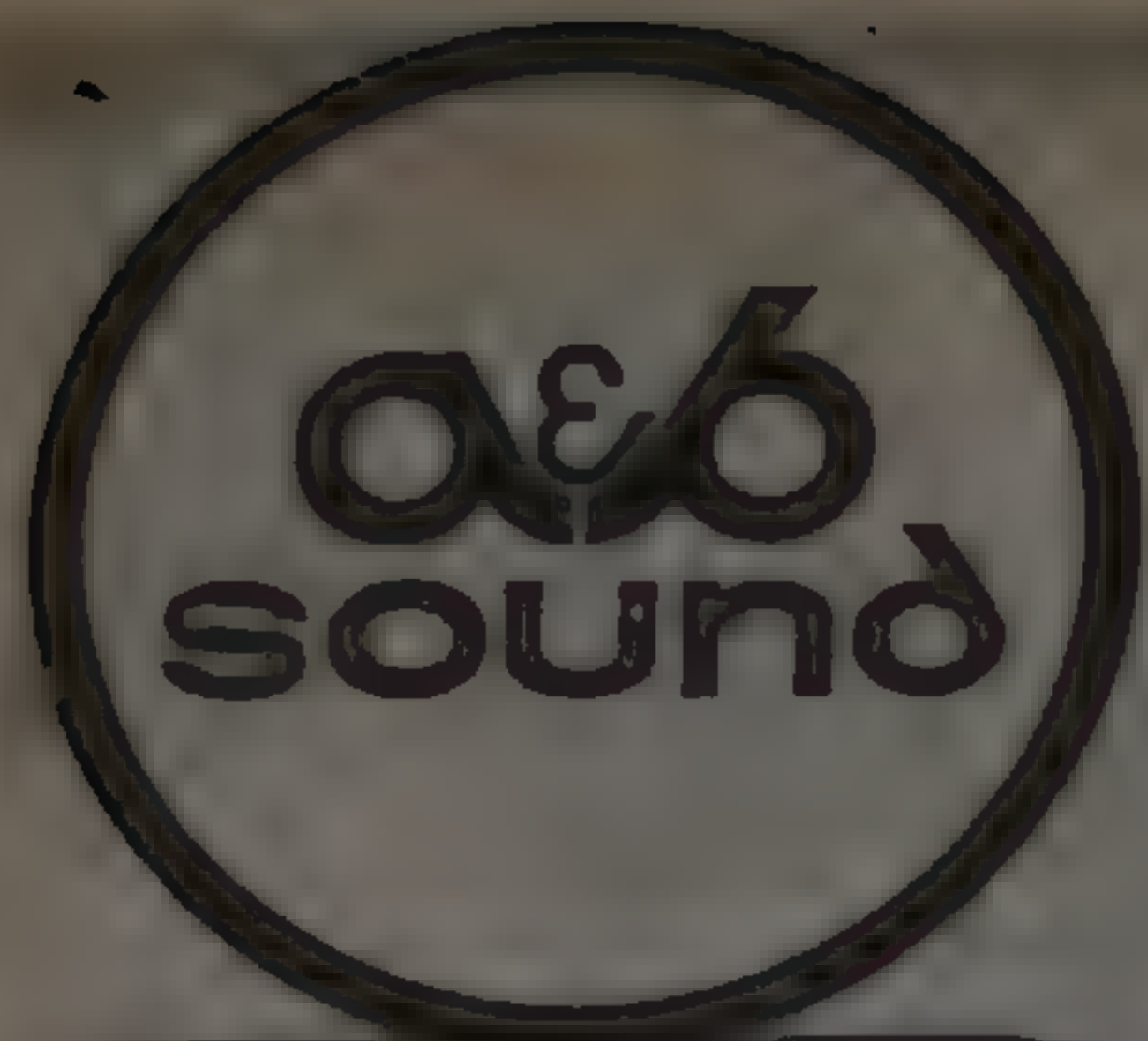
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NEW SOUNDS

M.I.A.
ARULAR
(XL)

"Someone like me has never made it on the radio before, ever, or on anyone's TV. And the boringest channels I can make it on, the better. I want people to listen to me while they're playing bingo in Swansea." That's Maya Arulpragasam—the gifted 27-year-old Sri Lankan hip-hop artist who records under the name M.I.A.—talking to Sasha Frere-Jones in the *New Yorker* last November. I don't know if she'll get her wish; the music on her debut album *Arular* is probably too defiantly original and exotic to break into the playlists of even the most open-minded pop or hip-hop station. But *Arular* has totally conquered my home stereo system; whether it's the stuttering horns on "Bucky Done Gun," the propulsive beat of "10 Dollar" or the witty, angular raps that Arulpragasam recites on every track of the disc, I can't get enough of her.

M.I.A.'s vocal rhythms have earned her comparisons to British grime artists like Dizze Rascal, and the comparison is not entirely unjustified—her rapping on "Sunshowers" and "Galang," the two tracks that close out *Arular*, does indeed walk a fairly Dizze path. But in place of Dizze Rascal's aggressive, stripped-down beats (which I find assaultive to the point of unlistenability), M.I.A.'s songs have a slightly softer, lush world-music texture that I greatly prefer. Not that she's any less pointed in her songwriting—"10 Dollar" vividly evokes the life of a teenage prostitute and "Amazon" takes the point of view of a kidnapped tourist in South America, both times using short, snappy couplets that are equal parts rap lyrics and political slogans. It's all pretty catchy stuff. (She certainly seems to have more fun making music than most rappers do.) In fact, the more I listen to it, the more I think those Swansea bingo-players had better watch out after all—M.I.A. is hot on their trail. ★★★★★ —PAUL MATWYCHUK



THE HUGH DILLON
REDEMPTION CHOIR
THE HIGH COST OF LOW LIVING
(MAPLEMUSIC)

On the debut album from the Hugh Dillon Redemption Choir, the former Headstones frontman sounds almost optimistic. Where has the self-destructive poetry of his old band gone? Well, not too far, I suppose—after all, the album is called *The High Cost of Low Living*, and he hasn't abandoned his old subject matter in songs like "My Mistakes." But there's nonetheless a difference, both lyrically and musically, this time around: without ignoring his past, Dillon is now more interested in the future. On "What It Takes," he sings, "I'm not waiting for the sun to shine today/Not looking for the great escape/No waiting for the world to turn my way/And that's okay." The darkness is now an undercurrent threatening to sweep the songs away, rather than a stormcloud about to pour down on them.

The best thing about this album is that it doesn't sound like the work of Dillon's old band. It's always a disappointment when an artist takes up with a new group of musicians only to regurgitate his past work, but that's not the case here. Sure, that distinctive voice is still front and centre, but the Redemption Choir has a sound of their own. The opening track, "Surface of the Sun," kicks the album into high gear with a staccato guitar riff and some rolling piano, and it just gets better from there. This isn't a vanity project where generic players lay down an inoffensive musical bed for the singer to show off. This band is every bit as



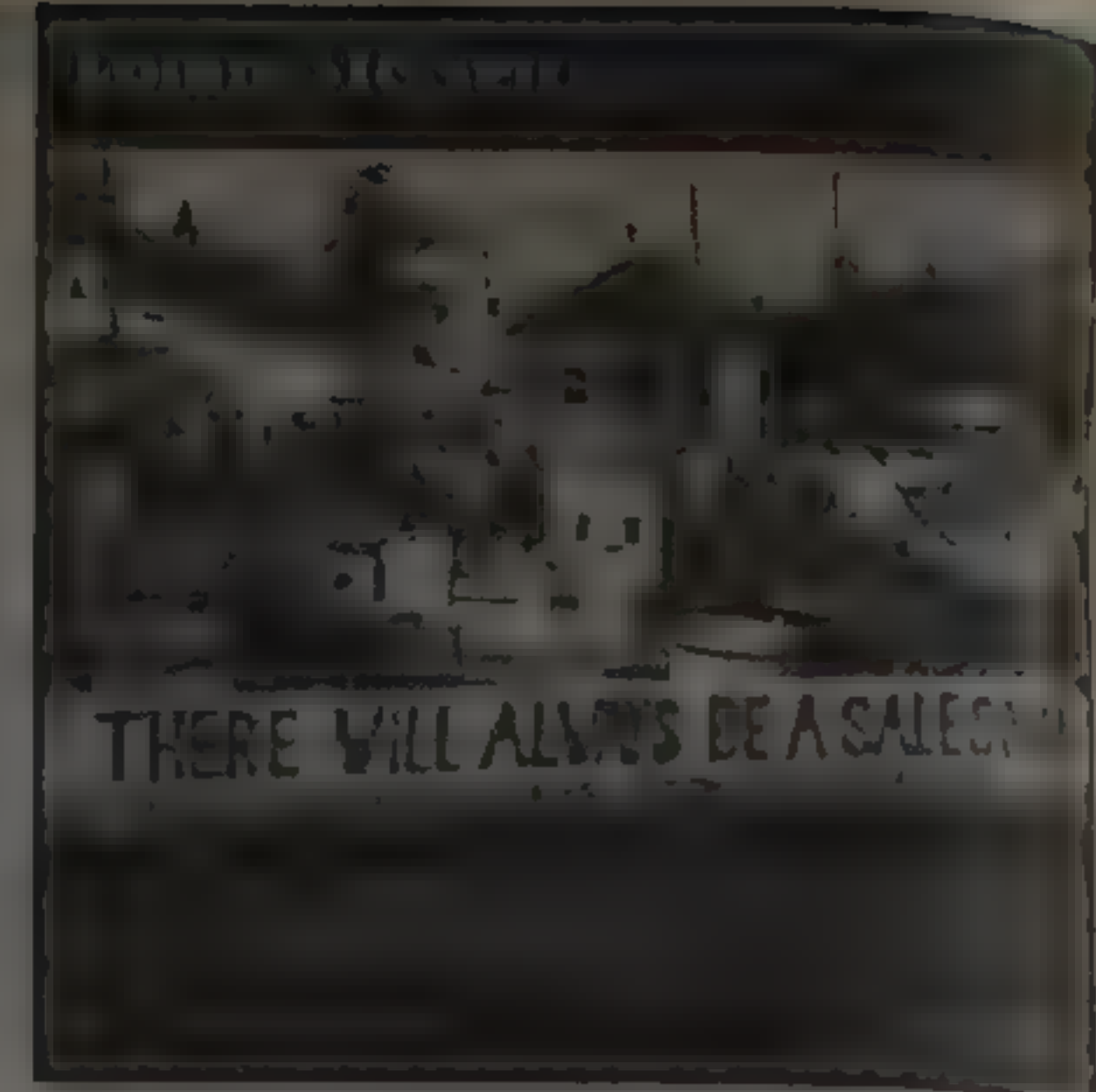
good as the Headstones were—but different. ★★★★★ —EDEN MUNRO

TOLAN MCNEIL
THERE WILL ALWAYS BE A SALESMAN
(RED CAT)

Summer is still lurking elusively behind some dark corner, but I've already decided *There Will Always Be a Salesman* is going to be one of my non-negotiable camping albums of the year; it'll fit well into my schedule of beer-drinking, picking at a fire and then losing my marshmallow into it.

The latest creation from musical wizard and producer guy Tolan McNeil, *Salesman* is a fun, quirky album that sticks in your brain long after you've heard it. Tracks like "Seat Sale" and "You Should Probably Just Come With Me Now" are packed with the kind of riffs that inspire you to take that air guitar out of the closet, and whimsical lyrics (like the moment on "Mom Mom Mom" when McNeil demands, "Mom, can we have a box of Honeycomb for dinner?") that will have you crossing your fingers and hoping that that kid gets his wish. After so many high points, McNeil gently eases us back down to earth with the closing track "I'm Going to France to Paint," filled with acoustic guitar that would warm even the chilliest winter night.

In short, this is a western Canadian gem of an album that shouldn't be overlooked or forgotten—whether the occasion calls for a little camping, or just an afternoon of melting into a case of beer with your friends. ★★★★★ —JASMINE POLITESKI



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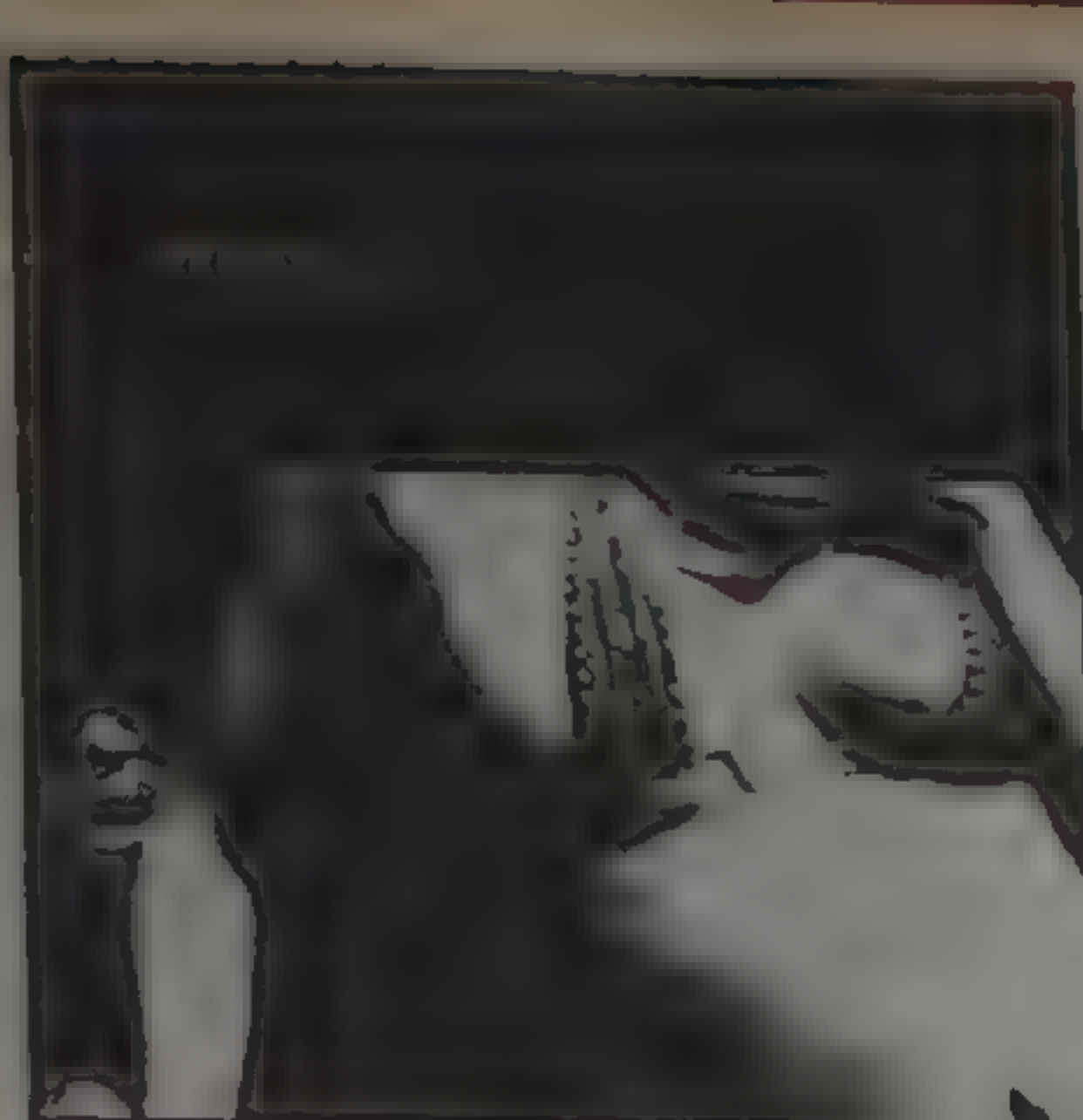
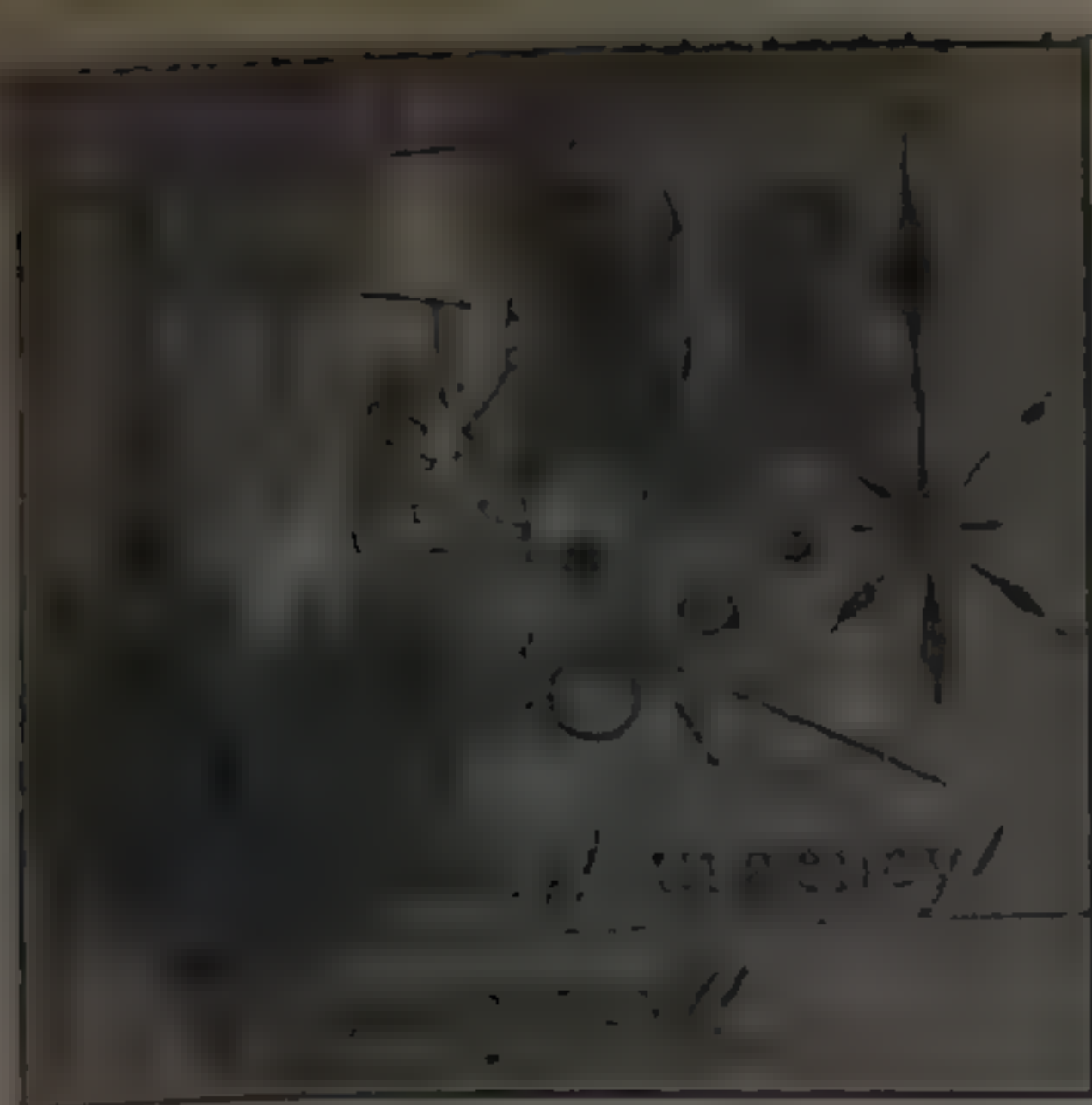
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MARK BIRTLES PROJECT URGENCY! URGENCY! EMERGENCY!! (RECTANGLE)

If you've never seen Mark Birtles Project play live, you're depriving yourself of one of Edmonton's best live acts. The Birtles boys have the onstage energy of ADD children on speed, and there are few bands in Edmonton who seem to enjoy performing as much as they do.

That said, their particular brand of fuzzy, supercharged prog-rock is difficult to translate to vinyl. But while it must have been awfully tough to record, say, lead singer Mark Raymond's spastic dance moves, for a group with this much performance panache, this album should feel more alive. Instead, it ends up feeling claustrophobic—for instance, the first song, "Head Drop Stomp," was obviously meant to be an uptempo crowd-starter, but instead it feels like it was recorded in a five-by-five room, and it seriously cramps the Project's style. Most of the other songs don't fare much better: on "Cantankerous Robots," for instance, you can spot the moment where you're supposed to start jumping around and shaking your head, but the energy is so muted, it just comes off as a so-so toe-tapper.

It's a shame, because Mark Birtles Project really is one of the more exciting bands around town. They just have to find a way to bottle all that

energy and cram it into a record. ★★ —DAVID BERRY

AMOS LEE AMOS LEE (BLUE NOTE)

Folk artist Amos Lee demonstrates some serious soul on his self-titled debut album; he's what I imagine Stevie Wonder would have sounded like if he'd gone the guitar route. Amos, sings a lot about love and a little about trouble, at one point claims, "I ain't no wide-eyed rebel/But I ain't no preacher's son." Though he heads for the darkness in a roundabout way on a few songs ("Black River" and "Soul Suckers" come to mind), for the most part, he's a genuinely happy guy trying to see the light at the end of the tunnel.

While love is obviously a favourite subject for songwriters, it can make for a pretty boring topic without the music to back it up. Lee, thankfully, has skirted that problem, assembling some excellent backup musicians to lend a hand; simple, minimalist acoustic guitar, bass and drums provide the structure, leaving plenty of open spaces for electric guitars, keyboards, mandolins and strings to fill out and elevate the material. Along the way, Norah Jones provides piano accompaniment on a couple of tracks, and Devin Greenwood chimes in with some tasteful sounds from the

Hammond B3 and Wurlitzer on several others. My favourite track is the positively inspirational "Bottom of the Barrel," highlighted by some great mandolin work by Kevin Breit. Nothing here is going to change the world, but Lee's folk-soul sound is a hell of a lot of fun to listen to. ★★★ —EDEN MUNRO

PREFUSE 73 SURROUNDED BY SILENCE (OUTSIDE)

Prefuse 73's new disc, *Surrounded By Silence*, is a thought-provoking mélange of smart hip-hop and experimental electronic looping and sampling. "Hideyaface," featuring a rap by Ghostface, and "Sabbatical With Options," featuring Aesop Rock, are a cut above the rest, anchoring the album and keeping it from flying off into a whimsical art project. The more melodic, looped-acoustic moments are reminiscent of early Lemon Jelly, but with more urban grit. Artsy, but still street.

Unfortunately, the coolest parts of the disc—the rampant playfulness and fearless sonic contortions—are also its undoing. Despite the creativity on display here, it simply doesn't stand up to repeated listens. Just when Prefuse's experimentation starts to develop into something unique and groovy, he changes it up into something else—and the choppiness quickly gets tiresome. ★★★ —IAN LUCH

haiku QUICK SPINS BY ~~THE~~ T.B. PLAYER and mr. dinkeyes

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Disco, so why am I still
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Spitalfield

Stop Doing Bad Things (Victory)

Soft verse, loud chorus
It's emo gold, I tell ya
Stupid emo kids

Blue Rodeo

Are You Ready? (Warner)

No chart-toppers here...
Just really fucking good songs
Like you didn't know

Great Lake Swimmers

Bodies and Minds (Weewerk)

Songs so heartbreaking
You'll want to call your mom and
Cry yourself to sleep

Mando Diao

Hurricane Bar (Mute)

Hey, it's the Clash!
No, hold up; it can't be—
The Clash don't suck

Complete

Windows and Shadows (Spawner)

Lame-ass teen anthems
So angsty and yet so bland
Nice box-top hats, jerks

Andy Stochansky

100 (Linus)

Dear Linus Records
My player won't play your disc
It's making me sad

Moby

Hotel (V2)

Dreamy soundscapes and
Smart, grabby pop hooks—it's like
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Monade

A Few Steps More (Too Pure)

Jazzy French synth-pop
That's, uh, all I got, really
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Night of the living Dead

The Maybellines finally release *The Maybellines Are Dead...* seven years after recording it

BY STEVEN SANDOR

Seven years ago, the Maybellines were one of the most talked-about bands on the Edmonton music scene. During the brief window that the band was together—i.e., from 1995 to 1998—the Maybellines' mix of country and rock influences earned them a solid following. But before the band could reward that following with a debut album, the band broke up, just three years after they first played together.

Even though the majority of the album was complete, the breakup squashed any plans for its release. Since then, the members have all gone their own very separate ways. Singer and bass player Brent Oliver has continued to be a major part of the scene, playing in numerous bands, running his own record label (Green Pepper Records), starting up the May Kings and booking shows at the Sidetrack. Guitarist and singer Gavin Dunn has just formed his own new group, the Vernois Constellation, which has a grand total of one show on its résumé. Rob "Gravy" Hoffart, the Maybellines' drummer during most of the recording process, is currently the man behind the kit for Whitey Houston. Guitarist Miles Walmsley moved to Toronto.

The band had some serious internal problems at the time of the breakup, but as time passed, the wounds healed enough for the ex-members to broach the possibility of finishing the mixing and mastering



and actually putting out those songs they recorded back in '98. This week, that album, *The Maybellines Are Dead*, will be out—albeit in very limited quantities, with a run of 100. Both the May Kings and the Vernois Constellation will play the CD release show, but don't expect a Maybellines reunion onstage. That's not in the plans for the evening.

DUNN SAYS that the process of mixing and mastering those tapes offered

PREVIEW NOSTALGIA

quite the trip down memory lane. "It's funny to look back at the songs lyrically," he says. "It gave a sense of what we were going through at the time, like going through old diaries and reading references to a lot of old pain."

And it's not just the lyrics that made him scratch his head; the quality of the playing on the record also raised a few eyebrows. Dunn says he considered himself more accomplished as a songwriter than a guitar player at the time, and it shows on *The Maybellines Are Dead*. "I wasn't that great a guitar player back then," he admits. "I have grown so much as a player that I listened to the old tapes and realized that some of my playing on it was pretty bad. I had to fight the

temptation to redo some of my parts."

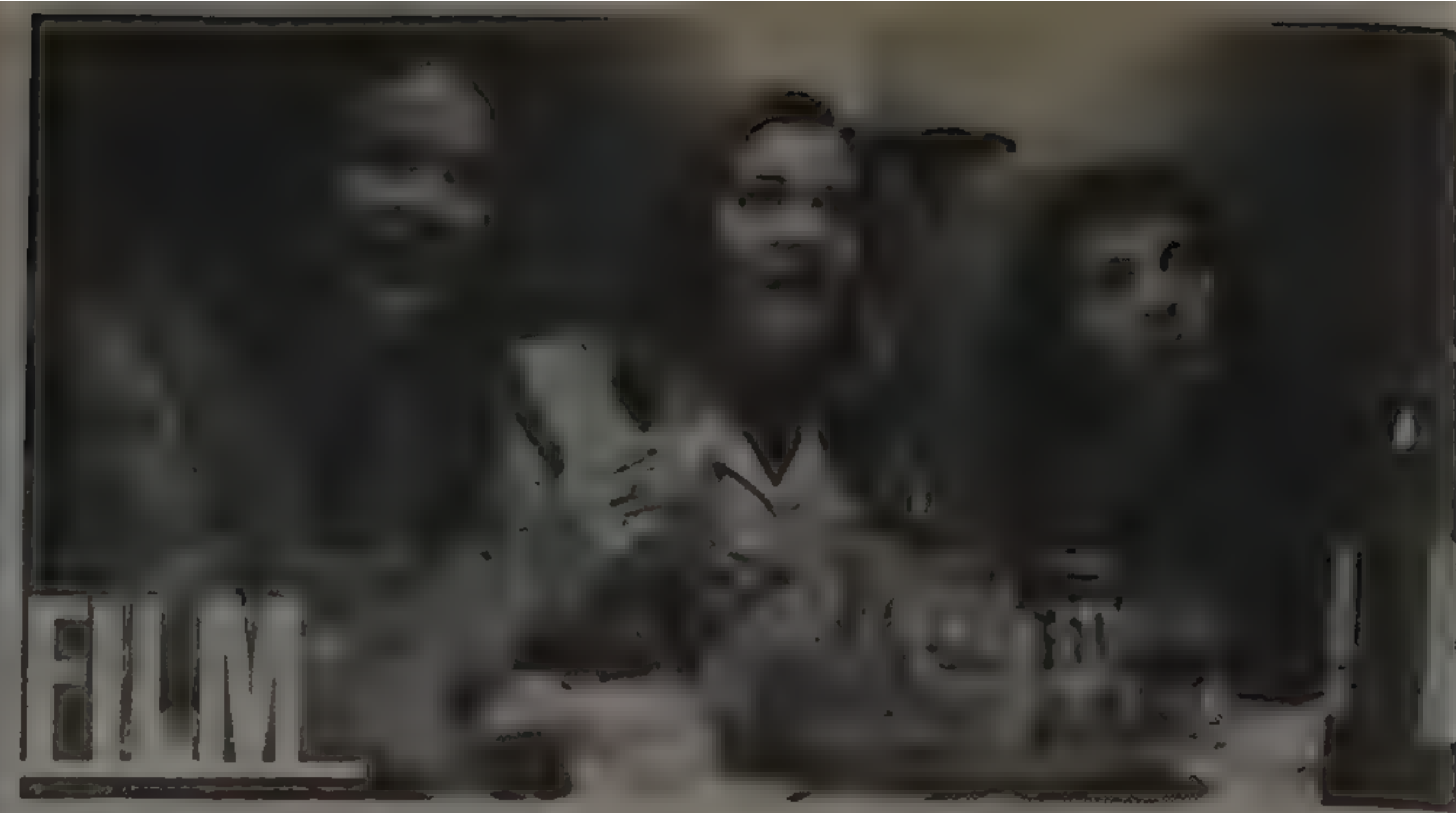
But even more painful to listen to, says Dunn, was all the bickering between takes. The raw footage is proof of just how fractured the band already was, even months before the final breakup. "I think about how we were a bunch of dicks back then," says Dunn.

But hindsight, as they say, is 20/20, and as Dunn explains, he had some very specific reasons for quitting the Maybellines even though he has yet to realize the goals he set for himself back then. And maybe, he ruminates, the things he set out to do when he walked away from the band in 1998 just aren't as important anymore. "I quit the band because it had got a little heavier than I wanted it to be," he says. "I was heavily into country music at the time, and that is what I wanted to do."

Oddly enough, he never got around to exploring that territory with any of his other projects and bands; the Vernois Constellation is "not even remotely country," Dunn allows. "The ironic thing," he says, "is that Brent's the one in the country band now." ☐

THE MAYBELLINES CD RELEASE

Featuring the May Kings and the Vernois Constellation • Black Dog Freehouse • Wed, Mar 30



My mother the dyke

Three sisters cope (badly) with their mom's sexual conversion in *My Mother Likes Women*

BY COLLEEN ADDISON

It's a birthday party: mother is holding the cake, homemade, the middle of it sagging a bit. The three daughters sing, in light voices; they are older, not kids, the eldest just

touching middle age, the youngest over the hump of 20. But wait! One of the family has a revelation, a new lover, a bit too young for her, and Czech, not Spanish. The doorbell rings; the lover enters. It's a woman!

But wait again. Whose lover is this? One of the daughters? Er, no: Eliska (the lovely Eliska Sirova) is mother Sofia's (Rosa María Sardà) girlfriend.

My Mother Likes Women, the winner of a number of awards in its native Spain, is a great movie, funny and, well, somewhat realistic. This is a film that revolves around family relationships, and it presents them in an excellent true-to-life manner. The three sisters exhibit the kind of selfishness that you never get over when dealing with your parents; their lives are their own, but it's really all about you. (How will this affect us, Jimena (María Pujalta) asks, as the sisters gulp down beer after their mother's announcement.) And the family shows, too, the sort of tired affection that accepts each other's quirks, even the yucky ones. Sol (Silvia Abascal) and Jimena roll their eyes as Elvira (Leonor Watling) panics, familiar beyond belief with their sister's neuroses. And after pink-haired Sol, lead singer of a local rock band, outs her mother in a song, the rest of the family doesn't explode in fury at her. They simply sigh.

It's Elvira who has the worst reaction to the news. If her mother is gay, is she gay too? Her track record with men isn't the best: her sleazy shrink (Aitor Mazo) tries to feel her up, while her attempts at a relationship with handsome writer Miguel (Chisco Amado) end in tears. (Incidentally, Elvira's date with Miguel is the one real misstep in the film. Elvira is so exasperating, agonizing on their very first date about Miguel's

probable desertion, you can't watch the screen. It's a bit on the daring side; not too many directors in a film of this sort would make their heroine unsympathetic, if only for a moment. Admirable, but grating.)

ELVIRA'S LOVE LIFE gets worse, though; she bonds with Eliska, and their friendship turns, one drunken night, to an almost-kiss. Eliska and Sofia's subsequent breakup at first elates the sisters, then worries them as they watch their mother sink into depression. When Eliska leaves for Prague, the sisters follow to try to

convince Eliska to return to their mother. This is particularly nice; not only does the City of 100 Towers look its cobblestoned best (it's surprisingly tourist-free), but you get a real sense of how Europe works, with its mix of languages. Sol is attracted to Eliska's brother (uncredited, but very cute) and, knowing he can't speak Spanish, asks him for a date—in English. Here you get a real sense of how these different nationalities use English as the glue that binds them (thank you, Western imperialism). Sol doesn't even ask if Eliska's brother speaks English; it's just assumed that he does, at least a little.

And it's all okay; Eliska's back, merrily playing piano duets with Sofia. Actually, reality goes out the window a bit as directors Inés París and Daniela Fejerman bend over backwards to give everyone a happy ending. Jimena, who, as we learn rather abruptly, is unhappily married, gets a divorce and takes up with a sexy gardener (Fernando Colomo). Long-suffering Miguel is still, despite everything, improbably delighted to see Elvira on his porch step. Yep, he's still interested, bouncing her cheerily into bed, almost without saying a word.

It's all just a tad unbelievable, but fun. The sisters throw another party for their expanded family. It's no longer just the three sisters and their mother; now we have lots of Czechs and Spaniards, all skipping around gaily (!) beneath a Spanish sun. ☐

MY MOTHER LIKES WOMEN

Written and directed by Inés París and Daniela Fejerman • Starring Leonor Watling, Rosa María Sardà, Silvia Abascal, María Pujalta and Eliska Sirova • Zeidler Hall, The Citadel • Fri-Sat, Mar 25-26 (7pm) • Metro Cinema • 425-9212

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The hunting of the president

Niels Mueller and Sean Penn revisit the strange, forgotten story of Samuel Byck in *The Assassination of Richard Nixon*

BY JOSEF BRAUN

ON THE COVER

its attempt to reconstruct the psychological disintegration of Samuel Byck, the little-known would-be presidential assassin who planned to fly a passenger plane into the White House in 1974, *The Assassination of Richard Nixon* runs the risk of trying to illuminate a mind that's either simply impenetrable or whose workings are so defiantly banal as to make even the most rigorously analytical efforts fruitless. Byck (whose name is spelled "Bicke" in the film) was a frustrated office furniture salesman who wanted to run his own business; a father of two small children, he was going through a divorce he didn't want, and he had estranged himself from his conservative Jewish family. But however genuinely despairing these problems may have been, he began to inflate and distort them through a socio-political lens that allowed him to christen himself a martyr for the fundamental falsity of the American Dream.

As usual, Sean Penn gives an obsessively committed performance as Byck, one as utterly cringe-inducible as Robert De Niro's nutso turns in *Driver*, *Raging Bull* or *The King of Comedy*. Raging in small, lonely, cluttered rooms, screaming at TVs in his ex's apartment, throwing drinks in strangers' faces, making infantile wee-hour calls to his ex, Penn's performance so conveys the picture that most of his co-stars are cornered into playing single notes. (I liked Michael Atkinson's animation of Don Cheadle's supporting role as Byck's only friend as playing one big "just take it easy.") Elements of *The Assassination* intrigued me, and certainly shook me, while others just left me cold. Still, I bought the argument that Sam Byck matters, that he has something to teach us—what, exactly? How do we extract light from his story? This is not an easy question to resolve for a historical filmmaker, yet even if I found the purpose of

The Assassination to be at times elusive, I have to say that that I found speaking with its director/co-writer, Niels Mueller, totally engaging. Mueller's directorial debut clearly emerged from some very clear and deliberate artistic and sociological concerns and, over five years in the making, was a true labour of love (one kept alive, in part, by the persistence of its devoted star and the many distinguished filmmakers who came on board as producers, such as Alfonso Cuarón, Leonardo DiCaprio and Alexander Payne).

And, as if the contemporary relevance of Byck's story needed any further illustration, Mueller informed me of a shooting that had occurred the day before our conversation outside his home town of Milwaukee during a church service held in a hotel; the shooter killed eight people, including himself, and wounded four. Mueller actually first started to consider filming a story like this after a horrendous shooting at a McDonald's outside San Diego back in the '80s when he first moved to California. Mueller was deeply disturbed by the shooting; it bothered him long after the event had passed, and he took notes. "I thought this guy had to belong to another species," Mueller explained to me. "He was shooting kids riding bicycles. Killed, like, 27 people, this guy. Horrific. And I thought, 'How could a human being do something like this?' It's something I wanted to understand." Mueller spoke to me by phone from his home in Glendale, California.

Vue Weekly: How much did you know about the real Sam Byck before you began to work on *The Assassination of Richard Nixon*?

Niels Mueller: The greatest resource for my writing partner Kevin Kennedy and I were the transcripts of the tapes that Sam Byck sent to prominent Americans, including

Leonard Bernstein. In the film we simplified it down to just Bernstein. The tapes, in which he describes his reasons for doing what he did, were really this voice from the grave that allowed us to capture the spirit of this guy. We also read newspaper articles from the time of the event, of course, and we got the FBI file. But what initially was my source of having any knowledge of this event happening in the first place was a slim chapter in a book I'd taken out of the L.A. Public Library. I'd taken out 10 books on assassins and only one had any mention of Byck; the rest ignored the story. He really is this forgotten footnote in American history.

VW: Were you searching for a story like this?

PREVIEW **DRAMA**

NM: I'd started writing something called *The Assassination of LBJ*. I was interested in writing about an assassin whose assassination attempt isn't noticed, not knowing at the time that such a story existed. I was also interested in examining how someone like this goes from point A to point B, B being the place where they've lost all empathy for the people right in front of them.

VW: The names almost seem like too much of a coincidence: Sam Byck and Travis Bickle from *Taxi Driver*, both lonely, would-be political assassins in the mid-'70s.

NM: Yeah. Sean asked Paul Schrader if he knew of Byck and he apparently didn't.

VW: Were you inspired by that '70s "lonely man" subgenre?

NM: There are some great '70s films that I'm sure filter into my consciousness—honestly, *Taxi Driver* less so than *Raging Bull* in terms of Scorsese's films. People ask me a lot about Willy Loman and *Death of a Salesman* too. But I think Sam Byck and Travis

Bickle and Willy Loman all spring from, or owe a greater debt to, Georg Büchner's early 19th-century play *Woyzeck*. I'm sure Schrader's a literary guy and *Taxi Driver* seems to echo things in the play. I certainly stole from the film of *Woyzeck* by Werner Herzog. So it goes back a long way, these sorts of thoughts and feelings.

VW: But there does seem to be something in the American movies of the '70s that facilitated the bubbling up of these unsavoury, antisocial or socially invisible characters into the popular consciousness. Sean Penn's films as a director seem to have gleaned something from that movement too.

NM: Well, I think that was probably a period when studios weren't necessarily run by the MBAs. Studios were making films like *Shampoo* and *Chinatown*. I think they would reject scripts like that out of hand right now. I'm honestly not a huge student of film—I studied international relations and literature—but I'm sure it's true that my film has some kinship to films from that period and the points you make are apt. But what I was concerned with while writing the film was how it related to things going on today, its relevance to society rather than its placement in film. I mean, the thing in Milwaukee yesterday, I don't know enough about it yet to claim that there's another unfortunate cousin of Sam Byck's, but it seems like we deal with these things on a regular basis. Even the similarities between Byck's proposed mode of assassination and 9/11, those are the kinds of things I've been more interested in than film references.

VW: It is interesting to consider a story like this right now because we're so inundated with analysis of acts of violence in other cultures where there's much more explicit political connections. With someone like Byck, he may have his political

convictions, but he's not organized, he's not affiliated with any group.

NM: Yeah. Well, I guess he's looking for association. He tries the Black Panthers but doesn't find a home there....

VW: That's a very funny scene.

NM: Maybe if he'd found an association, he wouldn't be dismissed as a mentally disturbed person. Not to say he's not a mentally disturbed person, but then he'd be something else; he'd be a terrorist. That's an interesting question, and the kinds of films I'm interested in are the ones that prompt those kinds of questions. You know, I think if you took a good look at some of the people who do these politically charged violent acts abroad and then look at these people like Sam Byck, you might find a shared series of steps that lead them to where they finally go, regardless of the statement.

VW: I suppose this is the sort of story that may have more influence over a larger public within a fictional framework. Otherwise the central figure just remains marginalized and there's little motivation for people to consider the significance of his actions. You can get at different things. Even in the case of an individual as endlessly scrutinized as Lee Harvey Oswald, I think there were still so many things about his life and actions one could learn from reading Don DeLillo's *Libra*, for example.

NM: Exactly. That's exactly why I did this the way I did. To try and get inside the head of this marginalized figure and try to make some sense of what's in there. Sometimes you have to fictionalize history to get to a deeper truth. ☐

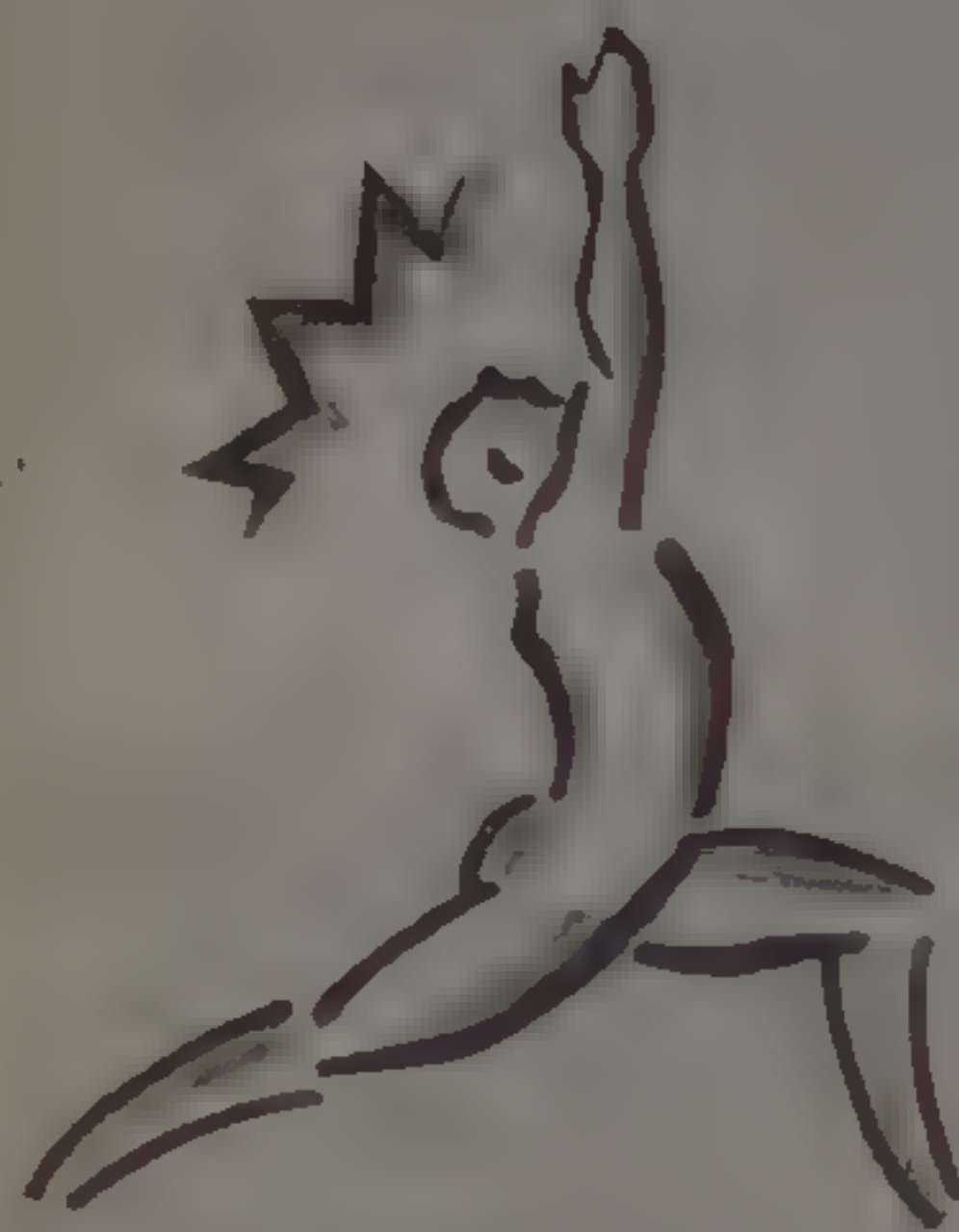
THE ASSASSINATION OF RICHARD NIXON

Directed by Niels Mueller • Written by Niels Mueller and Kevin Kennedy • Starring Sean Penn, Naomi Watts and Don Cheadle • Opens Fri, Mar 25

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FILM WEEKLY

THIS WEEK'S NEW MOVIES

The Assassination of Richard Nixon Sean Penn, Naomi Watts and Don Cheadle star in writer/director Niels Mueller's brooding examination of the life of Samuel Byck, the alienated salesman whose all-consuming frustration with his inability to achieve the American Dream led to an ill-fated attempt to kill the president by hijacking an airplane and flying it into the White House.

Beauty Shop Queen Latifah, Alicia Silverstone, Andie MacDowell, Alfre Woodward and Kevin Bacon star in Honey director Billie Woodruff's spinoff from the popular Barber-shop comedies, about an Atlanta hairdresser who decides to take revenge on her unappreciative boss by opening a beauty salon of her own. (Opens Wednesday)

The Bottom Line: Privatizing the World Director Carole Poliquin's documentary polemic, which uses stories from Canada, Mexico, France, Brazil, India and the United States to illustrate the devastating impact of the growing encroachment of corporate interests upon the private lives of ordinary people. Zeidler Hall, The Citadel; Thu, Mar 24 (7pm)

Edvard Munch Geir Westby, Gro Fraas, Eric Allum and Amund Berge star in this restored 35mm print of Privilege writer/director Peter Watkins's demanding 1974 biography of the great 19th-century Norwegian artist, his development of expressionistic painting and his bitter struggles with hostile critics and uncomprehending audiences. In Norwegian with English subtitles. Zeidler Hall, The Citadel; Sun-Mon, Mar 27-28 (7pm)

End of the Century: The Story of the Ramones Directors Jim Fields and Michael Gramaglia's vivid rockumentary about the life and music of the renegade New York punk band the Ramones, whose simple, hard-driving, two-chord songs and blue-collar attitude revolutionized rock music. Zeidler Hall, The Citadel; Fri-Sat, Mar 25-26 (9pm)

Guess Who Ashton Kutcher, Bernie Mac and Zoë Saldana star in Barbershop 2: Back in Business director Kevin Rodney Sullivan's race-reversed remake of Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?, in which a young white man gets put through the wringer when his black girlfriend's disapproving father learns about their plans to get married.

Miss Congeniality 2: Armed and Fabulous Sandra Bullock, Regina King, Enrique Murciano Jr. and Diedrich Bader star in Joe Somebody director John Pasquin's completely inexplicable sequel to the 2000 comedy hit, in which formerly tomboyish FBI agent Gracie Hart is called back into action when two of the friends she made in the first movie are kidnapped in Las Vegas.

My Mother Likes Women Rosa María Sardà, Leonor Watling, María Pujalta and Silvia Abascal star in directors Inés París and Daniela Fejerman's comedy about three sisters whose lives are turned upside-down when their widowed mother makes the startling announcement that she has begun dating an attractive younger woman. In Spanish with English subtitles. Zeidler Hall, The Citadel; Fri-Sat, Mar 25-26 (7pm)

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Do the Hustle!

Stephen Chow follows up joyous *Shaolin Soccer* with *Kung Fu Hustle*

BY STEPHEN NOTLEY

North American movieland looks kinda barren these days, but fear not; the Asians are still making films. South Korean cinema is the surging new style, and of course those folks in Hong Kong keep cranking them out as well. Newly out on DVD, for instance, is last year's *Kung Fu Hustle*, Stephen

Chow's next at-bat after the shatteringly good *Shaolin Soccer*.

We start with some cops getting humiliated and the introduction of the Axe Gang, black-suit-and-top-hat-wearing hatchet-wielders, who practise a giddily cool mélange of fighting styles from *Matrix Reloaded* and *Gangs of New York*. After some appropriately cold establishment of their badassery we are told that the Axe Gang are ascendant in 1940s Hong Kong, ruling all through terror, and only the poorest neighbourhoods escape their notice. And so we proceed to one of these neighbourhoods, Pig Sty Alley, wherein we meet an assortment of the oddball types with which Stephen Chow likes to pack his movies.



There's the drunken but affable layabout landlord stumbling around under the thumbnail of his screamingly tyrannical landlady wife, and an effeminate tailor, and a friendly donut-maker, and Bucktooth Jane, and a slim, fresh-faced boy who's always exposing his dimpled ass.

And then there's Stephen Chow, taking an almost subordinate role in this film as the cheap hustler who wanders into Pig Sty and tries to pretend he's an Axe Gangster. One thing leads to another, the real Axe Gang gets involved, and suddenly it turns out there were a lot more kung fu masters in this little slum than anybody realized—and from there the rest of the movie is an escalating unveiling of ever-more-astonishing kung fu mastery.

Kung Fu Hustle is no *Shaolin Soccer*. There's even a scene where Stephen Chow's character stomps a soccer ball flat—"No more soccer!"—and makes the children cry. *Shaolin Soccer*, for all its exploding joy and fun and humour, is a serious film;

when it goes for the heart it means it, and it never makes jokes at its own expense. With *Kung Fu Hustle*, that's the whole game: crazy referential gags, gigantic action sequences turned into jokes, stuff flying out in all directions. It's a much sillier movie, more along the lines of Chow's earlier films like *King of Comedy* and *God of Cookery*, with more absurd computer-assisted special effects. There are homages to and lifts from *Matrix Reloaded*, *Spider-Man*, *Top Hat* with Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, *Legend of Drunken Master*... the list goes on.

REVUE DVD

AND OF COURSE, there's some pretty primo kung fu. There's this one guy, Iron Fist, who sports rings around his wrists, and there's a light, almost poetic assassination scene that unfolds into a throwdown of ridiculous craziness, and there's some old-

school Toad Style stancing, and the best Buddha's Palm ever, and jammed in there somewhere is a sweet, corny little romantic scene that keeps dragging tears from my betraying, sentimental eyes every time I see it

In short, it's a Stephen Chow movie, jam-packed with crazy Chinese humour and whipsaw tone changes, a perfect example of that wonderful Chinese style of film that confidently blends comedy, action, horror and romance. In a better world *Shaolin Soccer* would have burst across America as a ray of golden light rather than being dribbled, pisslike, across the continent by the faithless folk at Miramax. In a better world, Stephen Chow would be revered here as he is in Hong Kong. Such was not to be. But Chow's still one of the great living filmmakers, and *Kung Fu Hustle* is prime Chow. Dig in. ☉

KUNG FU HUSTLE

Written and directed by Stephen Chow • Starring Stephen Chow, Leung Siu Lung, and Chiu Chi Lung • Now on DVD

If it ain't one Ring, it's another

Naomi Watts makes another appointment with Samara in ho-hum *The Ring Two*

BY STEPHEN NOTLEY

We recall *The Ring* as an American remake of the Japanese film *Ringu*. There's an evil videotape. If you watch it, you die a week later. Naomi Watts and her son watch it and spend a week trying to figure out how not to die. Turns out the tape is haunted by Samara, the ghost of a little girl drowned by her mother in a well, and the only way to escape Samara's curse is to make a copy of the tape and get someone else to watch it before the weeklong grace period expires and Samara peels herself out of the nearest TV to melt your face. This Naomi Watts does, and that's how she and her son survive. That's *The Ring*.

Now we have *The Ring Two*. Naomi and son have moved to a quiet seaside town and everything appears cool until a local kid gets his

hands on another copy of the tape and dies. It looks like Samara is back, and this time she wants to possess Naomi's son, bringing on round after round of vaguely spooky stuff.

So. Is it scary? The first *Ring* had a few creepy things going for it. There was the videotape itself, a unsettling little black-and-white Dalí-esque montage of flies and severe-looking women and a strange

REVUE HORROR

glowing ring, all accompanied by eerie, screechy backward sounds and musical notes. Then there was the technological angle, the troubling idea that a malevolent spirit could work through our devices and turn them against us; it's supposed to make us uneasy around telephones and televisions. And then there was the ghost herself, Samara, a soaking-wet girl with long black hair covering her face, crawlin' out of the TV and scaring people's faces off their skulls, a disturbing image at the time even if it's already become something of a cliché.

In *Ring Two*, the spooky videotape is limited to little more than a cameo;

we get a glimpse of it at the beginning and then soon after it gets tossed in a fire, making little "scree" noises as it burns, and along with it goes most of the fear-of-technology idea. As a replacement, *Ring Two* offers water as its central motif; whenever Samara's around, water pours in under the door and the carpet gets all squooshy and there's a big bathtub scene, bringing the 2005 Terror-in-the-Tub tally to two, *Constantine* being the other movie this year with a centerpiece bathtub scene. Apparently bathtubs are frightening these days.

Without the videotape gag, *Ring Two* boils down to a pretty basic ghost-possession story with little of the sense of dread and inevitability of the original. Naomi Watts is a great actress, but there's not a lot for her to do besides fret about her son. The film looks good—director Hideo Nakata, who made the Japanese *Ringu* films, keeps everything in pale blues and greys—but it never manages to generate anything truly disturbing. Skip it. ☉

THE RING 2

Directed by Hideo Nakata • Written by Ehren Kruger • Starring Naomi Watts, David Dorfman and Sissy Spacek • Now playing

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Mark S. Allen, UPN-TV

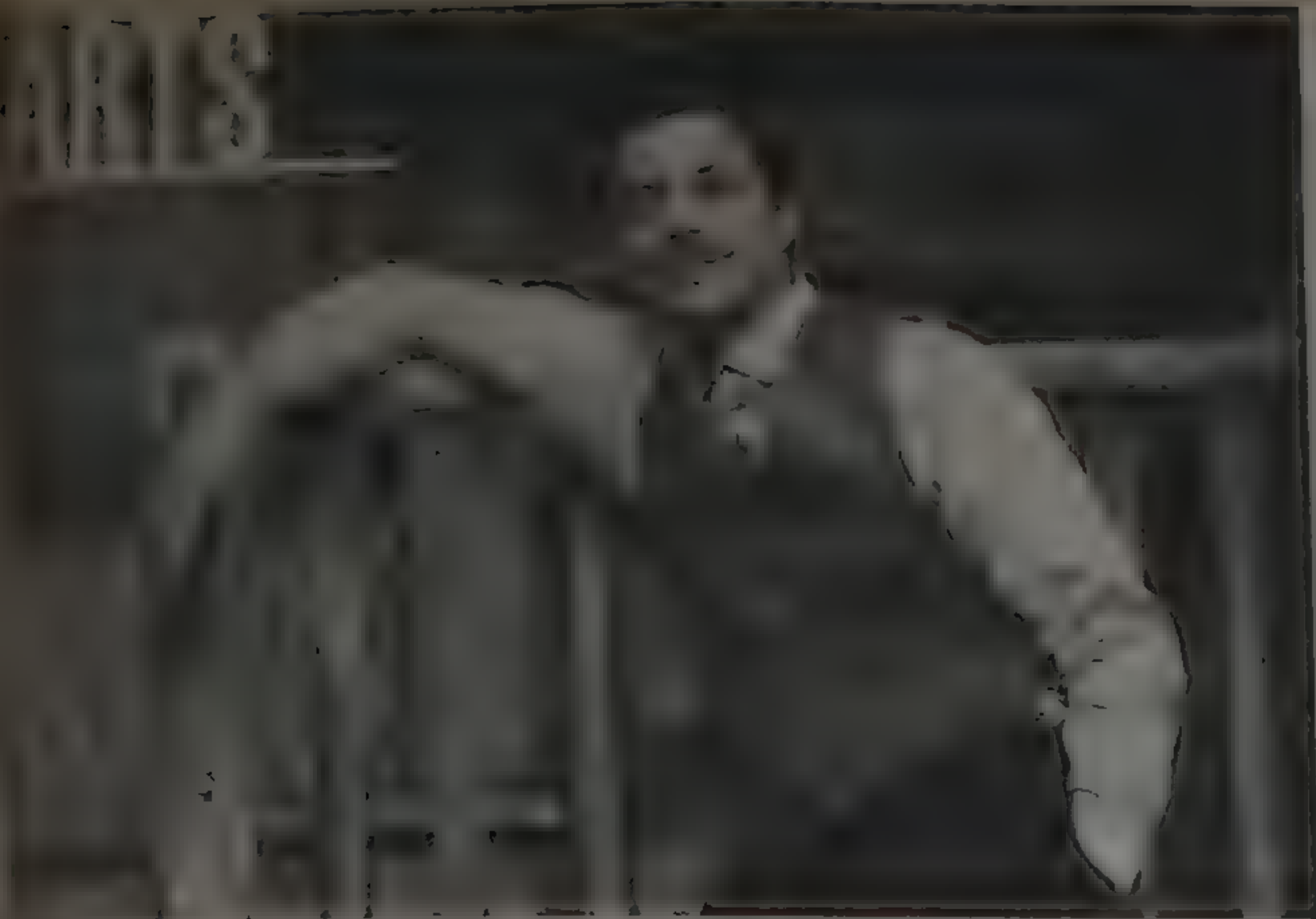
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The man from *Uncle*

David McNally helps take Chekhov to the prairie in Tom Wood's *Vanya*

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

I begin my interview with actor David McNally by presenting him with my bet theory about Chekhov versus Shakespeare. Like most of my theories

about classical theatre, it's shaky and supported by pretty much no evidence at all, but it's mine, dammit, and I'm going with it. McNally, you see, is playing the idealistic, brooding, alcoholic Dr. Astrov in the Citadel's world premiere of *Vanya*, Tom Wood's adaptation of Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya*, and he's also just finished playing Macduff in a production of *Macbeth* for Theatre Calgary. And so I suggest that for actors and directors, there's an imposing, slightly intimidating mystique that still surrounds Chekhov's plays, one that's

largely disappeared from the works of Shakespeare. Shakespeare is a familiar friend, Chekhov a quiet relative you visit maybe once a year. Just about every city of a certain size hosts an outdoor summer Shakespeare festival, but productions of Chekhov are much rarer, and Chekhov's plays—which are introspective, melancholy and distinctly lacking in action, violence and jokes about sexual organs—lack the common entertainer's touch that came so easily to Shakespeare.

"That may be," McNally says once I finally let him speak, "but what both writers do to actors is demand an emotional connection. I would say, though, that more thought goes into acting Chekhov than Shakespeare. So often in Shakespeare, you're actually speaking your thoughts and emotions, whereas in Chekhov you're often speaking *around* them. And Shakespeare moves things so quickly—it's scene change, scene change, scene change—whereas Chekhov likes to stay in a reality and explore what's going on underneath each interaction, all the things that have led up to this particular exchange at this particular moment.... He writes about the heart, and I think that universal quality is what's always attracted people to his writing."

CHEKHOV'S UNIVERSALITY gets put to the test with this particular version of the play, in which Wood transposes the action from the late 19th-century Russian countryside to the Alberta prairie. (The idea isn't new; another

local actor/director/playwright, Kenneth Brown, did the same thing in his Sterling-nominated 2002 Fringe play *Uncle Van*.) "It's not a far cry from the original Chekhov," McNally says. "The realities are very similar. Russia was going through a complete change in its system; they were going from land ownership to government ownership, a great shift in wealth and tradition. And in much the same way, Alberta was going through a profound change a few decades later, in 1928—going from a province of vast buffalo herds to vast farms.... And it's as lonely on the steppes as it is on the prairie. So many of these people had come tremendous distances from all around the world to re-establish themselves

PREVIEW THEATRE

in this harsh environment where they no longer have the amenities they were used to. Now it's the opposite—people come from places where they don't have the amenities to this place of prosperity. But that prosperity was built on people like the ones in this play, who made that journey."

Dr. Astrov, who has grand plans to conserve the forests as a legacy for future generations, is the most obviously visionary character, but McNally has greater admiration for Sonya, the unhappy, plain-faced woman whose love for Astrov is doomed to go unrequited. "Sonya is the shining light in the play," McNally says. "She maintains hope and patience when other people are giving up. I'd say she is Alberta—

she's the one who perseveres against the odds." In a weird way, I'd call her a spiritual sister to Dotty Parsons, the indomitable Alberta trailer park supermom Darrin Hagen plays in *Tornado Magnet*, one of the plays accompanying *Vanya* to Ottawa for Alberta Scene at the end of April.

VANYA'S FEATURED SLOT at Alberta Scene is a feather in the cap for Tom Wood, who besides writing the adaptation, plays the title role, whose jealous love for his brother-in-law's wife both humanizes him and sets him up for a series of painful humiliations. "Tom's really made an effort to separate himself as the playwright," McNally says. "He's even gone so far as to plug his ears when other people are saying their lines so that he's not tempted to do another rewrite. But he's always been very helpful when we've had discussions about changing the wording or snipping a line. It's been a very different experience from when I was doing *The Royal Hunt of the Sun* at the Citadel several years ago under Robin Phillips. We'd done all these cuts, and then Peter Shaffer, the playwright, sat in on the rehearsal process for a week. And Robin was running around, telling everyone, 'Erase the cuts! Erase the cuts!' We didn't have to worry about that this time." ☐

VANYA

Directed by Bob Baker • Written by Tom Wood • Starring Tom Wood, Jan Alexandra Smith, Catherine Fitch and David McNally • Shoctor Theatre, The Citadel • Mar 24-Apr 10 • 425-1820

The Pierre principle

Indomitable impresario Kristine Nutting lands Chez Pierre as site for theatre fundraiser

By LEAH COLLINS

There's a pair of white fuzzy dice hanging from Kristine Nutting's rear-view mirror; she knocks them with her elbow—like an inadvertent fling of the dice—as she hurries from her mustard-coloured Plymouth into the Beau coffee shop. Now, a set of novelty dice isn't necessarily a reason to count Nutting as some sort of arts community high-roller, but the actress and playwright has made some big gambles in the last year and, as with any wager, her odds of success have been less than 100 per cent.

Some months back, Nutting and her Cowgirl Opera Theatre troupe were lobbying on a Canada Council for the Arts grant coming through. The group had plans to tour Nutting's eclectic and rock-operatic prairie-thematic take on Chekhov's *Three Sisters* across Canada and federally-disbursed funds were crucial to the production's ability to travel beyond Alberta's borders. Alas, things didn't turn out as planned; all that came through was a flattering rejection letter which Nutting disappointed, but certainly not discouraged.

"I didn't want to bail on the project, so I was like, 'Great! That's awesome! Let's celebrate our failure!'" exclaims Nutting. Without the grant, she had another gamble in mind to help back her show, which is still slated to tour six Canadian cities this summer: a cabaret fundraiser featuring performance artists, burlesque dancers, musical acts and an art auction—all taking place at Edmonton's only old-time cabaret club, Chez Pierre. Not a bad idea, and one that's resulted in a Saturday-night fundraiser called *A Night of Prairie Failures*.

PREVIEW BURLESQUE

ures in Burlesque.

But Nutting's chances of *Prairie Failures* taking place at Chez Pierre were based on nothing more than a hunch. She'd been courting the club's colourful owner, Pierre Couchard for months when she heard the grant had fallen through; Nutting had wanted to stage *Three Sisters* in the strip club for some time.

"I heard that the room had never been renovated and it was one of these sort of pristine, beautiful little time capsules," Nutting says excitedly. "I'm originally from Winnipeg, and Winnipeg is full of places like that, whereas Edmonton is..." she pauses, giggling, "...not. All the places are so renovated and new. There aren't a lot of interesting places that have maintained their integrity, that are a little bit older."

For about a year, Nutting called Couchard every day until finally, she managed to pique his curiosity. "He was into it when he heard that it was a fundraiser, she says. "He said, 'Well, normally, you know, I charge \$2,000 a show, but you seem like a nice kid and I can tell you have no money. And because it's a fundraiser, you can have it.'"

Nutting was thrilled, but there was still a chance her idea wouldn't pan out—after all, she'd never even had a glimpse of the space she was convinced would be perfect for her cabaret show. Luck was on her side, though. "It's awesome! It's totally great!" she says. "There's dripping red and gold lamé and little sheik tents and the main stage setup is an old-school thrust with a black-and-white stage and little gold tassels hanging from the ceiling everywhere. It's covered with red velvet, with cushy chairs, and I just love the room."

Nutting's proud of the show, but she says the real payoff will be the fun she's planning on having. "I just want to go out and see my favourite band and a freakshow act and ladies doing a dance routine," she says. "And we'll just have a couple of drinks—at Chez Pierre! In a red room! With pasties!" ☐

A NIGHT OF PRAIRIE FAILURES IN BURLESQUE

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VUE

Murmurs of the art

Artist Tonia Bonnell's rural upbringing makes its voice heard in *Enunciated Murmurs*

By AGNIESZKA MATEJKO

It was two years ago that I first met Tonia Bonnell; she was assigned to be my teaching assistant in a fine arts course. I immediately sensed that there was a sense of a different culture about her—yet she had no accent besides a slight American twang from her home state of Illinois. She looked like every other fine arts graduate student in her uniform of blue jeans and baggy T-shirts. And yet, I could not get over the feeling that there was something exotic about her, as if she had come from a different world. "Perhaps she dropped into Edmonton on a tornado, like Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*," I mused. "After all, Illinois and Kansas are not that far apart." But despite my subtle prodding, I could not discover anything in her background that would stand out as unusual—nothing, that is, until we met again to speak about

her graduating exhibition *Enunciated Murmurs*, currently on display in the Fine Arts Building Gallery, a show that is her final visual presentation for her Master of Fine Arts degree.

It was only then that I realized that the mystery of her background had been right in front of my eyes all along. It was simple: unlike most of us who were bred, born and raised among the cement walls of urban centres, Bonnell grew up on

PROFILE VISUAL ARTS

the open prairie. "I have always been surrounded by open fields and sky," Bonnell says. "The town I lived in had 250 people. I knew everybody." That was it! I thought. Bonnell radiates that same mysterious composure that I've often observed in farmers and other rural people who are used to treating others like human beings and not life support systems for wallets. These are people who are used to working themselves to the bone and then waiting and unwearyingly watching for clouds of rain to form across the horizon.

Only for Bonnell's community, those clouds took a particularly

ominous turn. "Where I am from, you always get tornado warnings," she recalls stoically. "We aren't afraid of them; we look for funnels in the sky. They seldom happen." Bonnell spent a lot of time out on those fields looking at the sky. Her grandparents, who were farmers on both sides of the family, often took her along when they worked. "Driving up and down these roads takes so long, but you do it all day, dawn to dusk," she recalls. "Depending on the weather, they have to get it done."

GROWING UP in that rural community taught Bonnell a different way of looking at the world. "[In farming] there is no sense of building up to a climax and ending," she explains. "There is just continuous repetition." This was a lesson she incorporated right into her art; Bonnell's prints are built up out of thousands of repeated marks that take her days, hours and sometimes months to accomplish. "It strains certain parts of the body," she says without a trace of complaint. "I think that the repetitive mark-making allows me to block out some of the information-loaded society."

Out of this myriad of abstracted marks emerge atmospheric images

that drift across a white page like grey rain drifting against the wide expanse of a clear sky. But viewed from another angle, they seem more like gusts of wind, drifts of snow or quickly approaching clouds. Bonnell's images are gentle, ethereal, but their delicacy seems to disguise a hidden power—like sunny days that either warm seeds into sprouting or slowly, relentlessly desiccate fields. "You know clouds are intangible, yet they can visually cover a big mountain," Bonnell explains. In some of the prints, Bonnell's gently billowing "clouds" take on clear signs of their supreme power: they form the foreboding shape of a grey funnel.

Although Bonnell has come far from her rural, mostly blue-collar community into the intellectual ferment of one of North America's best printmaking departments, she

hasn't lost the sense of her roots. "Eventually I would love to return to a rural community," she says. But that may not be possible now that she is a few days short of getting her MVA degree, which will allow her to teach at a university. Whatever happens, she says, she will always return to nature. But wherever she ends up, I doubt she will ever forget the lesson she learned on her grandparents' farm as she watched the sky for signs of funnel clouds and felt part of something larger than herself. "As a human being, you can't always control it," she explains with the composure of a seasoned farmer. "We don't always know it's coming." ☐

ENUNCIATED MURMURS

By Tonia Bonnell • FAB Gallery (University of Alberta) • To Apr 2



free
will
astrology

By ROB BREZSNY

ARIES

Niccolò Paganini (1782-1840) was a virtuoso violinist as well as a master showman. Not content to dazzle audiences with his technical wizardry, he sometimes resorted to tricks to evoke even greater levels of astonished appreciation. Before one concert, he partially sawed through three of his violin's strings. When they broke in the midst of his first piece, he finished using just the remaining string. I'm telling you this story, Aries, because you may soon enter a Paganini-like state. You'll be at the top of your game, yet also tempted to add extra glitz to your shtick. It's not really necessary; your work will speak just fine for itself. But if you can't restrain yourself from going over the top, make sure you don't sacrifice any of your substance as you pump up your style.

TAURUS

From an astrological perspective, this won't be a good week to make big decisions based on what you read in newspaper horoscope columns. Similarly, the cosmic rhythms won't be aligned in your favour if you sit down in the middle of an intersection and beg an angel for a sign about which way you should go. On the

other hand, you shouldn't rely on the advice of practical experts or logical analysts to direct you either. Their influence would be equally wrong. In my opinion, there's only one thing you can trust right now: your body. You should formulate specific questions and invite your body to reveal the answers through its feelings and sensations.

GEMINI

My Gemini friend Thomas will be throwing a big party for himself soon. He'll be celebrating his graduation from a local college where he has been taking classes since 1993. His many years of matriculation can be explained in part by the sheer enjoyment he gets from being a student. The other reason for the delay is that he has had trouble passing a certain course that's necessary for his degree. But he's doing well in the course this time around; his teacher has told him he'll probably pass. I believe his imminent completion is something like what's unfolding in your life. Whether or not you're formally enrolled in school, you're about to complete lessons you've studied for a long time.

CANCER

The government of Uzbekistan has jailed more than 6,000 people for their political or religious beliefs. With the help of a large secret police force, its dictatorial ruler ruthlessly suppresses all opposition movements and independent media. Meanwhile, the United States has steadily expanded its military assistance to the Central Asian nation, increasing its contributions 1,800 per cent since 2001. According to my reading of the astrological omens, this is a perfect example of behaviour you should avoid in the coming weeks. Do not, under any circumstances, support anyone or anything that squelches

freedom or inhibits vitality, even if they purport to be doing it for a good cause. Give yourself generously, on the other hand, to influences that help people thrive in all their fertile diversity.

LEO

Isaac Asimov once said something that should be especially meaningful for you: "The most exciting phrase to hear in science, the one that heralds new discoveries, is not 'Eureka! I have found it!' but rather 'That's funny....'" According to my analysis of the astrological omens, your imminent destiny should lead you to some fascinating adventures that begin with "That's funny." Be hungry for what piques your imagination and tickles your love of mystery. Attune yourself to anything that seems out-of-place or oddly juxtaposed.

VIRGO

When's the last time you really gave yourself permission to watch a sunrise or sunset for more than a few seconds? I bet this activity has fallen so far off your list of things to do that, if left to your own devices, you might not treat yourself to it for months. That's just one reason I feel called to do an intervention. The other reason has to do with your current astrological omens. They say that you desperately need to be lifted up out of the everyday trance and exposed to sublime beauty; that you need to commune with our home star, the source of all the energy that fuels your life.

LIBRA

"If there's a book you really want to read but it hasn't been written yet," said author Toni Morrison, "then you must write it." In the event that you're a writer, Libra, I direct her

counsel to you. It's timely advice. But if you're not a writer, take heed instead of the following: If there's a world you want to live in or a gift you want to receive or a deed you want to benefit from or an adventure you want thrust upon you, make it yourself.

SCORPIO

"The greatest pleasure in life is doing what people say you cannot do," said English journalist Walter Bagehot. I don't agree with that sentiment in general, but it could temporarily be true for you, Scorpio. There may be no other activity that will generate as much satisfaction as refuting the low expectations others have had of you. Even classic thrills like sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll may not generate feelings equal to the bliss you'll enjoy when you accomplish what some supposedly knowledgeable person said was impossible.

SAGITTARIUS

Some readers complain when I draw inspiration from a public figure they consider a bad person. Once I cited philosopher Bertrand Russell, and Patti G. went ballistic: "Russell was a terrible father! How dare you give him any credence?" Another time I invoked a bit of wisdom from ex-U.S. president Teddy Roosevelt. "Why would you give that militaristic bully any space in your column?" wrote Arthur H. Here's how I usually respond to these grumbles: If I refused to learn from people unless I agreed with everything they had ever said and done, I would never learn from anyone. What about you, Sagittarius? Have you set up your life so that everyone is either on or off your good list? The astrological omens suggest it's an excellent time to dole out more slack, and to cultivate a capacity to derive help and insight from people who aren't perfect.

CAPRICORN

In all of North America, from Oaxaca to Prince Edward Island, there is only one state province or territory that does not yet have a McDonald's fast-food restaurant. It is Nunavut, in northern Canada, which the Inuit people inhabit at a density of about one person per 3,300 square miles. You should be like Nunavut in the coming week, Capricorn: unspoiled by mediocre food, vulgar entertainment, crass commercialism and cheap plastic anything. Be like a vast, pristine empire that's immune to soul-deadening crap.

AQUARIUS

As a performer in Canada's Daredevil Open Company, Tom Comet set a world record for juggling chainsaws. He threw and caught three of them 44 times while they were turned on and full of gasoline. Though there's no need for you to take that big a risk, Aquarius, you're likely to have a similar ability in your own chosen field. Whether you're managing to be all things to all people or trying to be in several places at once, I bet you'll demonstrate an extraordinary skill at juggling.

PISCES

A group of 12 workers in Derby, England bought a lottery ticket last December. They stuffed it in a plastic beaker at their workshop and forgot about it. Two months later, one of them read in the newspaper that the jackpot prize was still unclaimed. He tracked down the old ticket they'd bought and realized it had the winning numbers. Soon he and his cohorts were collecting the British equivalent of \$9.6 million. I regard this as a metaphor for a situation in your life, Pisces. You have not yet claimed a goodie that has been available to you for some time. Remedying that oversight, please. ☐

Cuban behaviour

Decidedly Jazz Danceworks makes a multicultural racket with world premiere of *¡Bulla!*

BY BRIAN GIBSON

For Kimberley Cooper and the dancers of Calgary's Decidedly Jazz Danceworks, the trip that's taking them to the Arden Theatre this Wednesday for the world premiere of *¡Bulla! A Loud Cuban Jazz Experiment* has taken them 10 years to complete.

In 1994, Hannah Stilwell, one of the group's founders, attended a performance by AfroCubanismo at the Banff Centre. She was enthralled and,

when AfroCubanismo returned two years later, she brought her fellow dancers to see the show. Kimberley Cooper was one of them, and soon she was working with Stilwell on the choreography and artistic direction for a jazz dance show inspired by Cuban rhythms and stories.

"At Decidedly Jazz, we're always sort of digging in the roots of jazz," Cooper explains. "The studying of this Afro-Cuban form just makes so much sense to us, and it makes so much sense to [do] this show, because of the pioneers that we are, and also as Canadians we have another advantage over our southern friends in the states, who can't really go to Cuba."

Stilwell lived in Cuba for a while. Cooper visited her there in 2001 and then, as the pair's ideas for the show came together, the two choreographers and some of the group's dancers returned to the island for five weeks fall, absorbing much of Cuba's rhythms, music and culture. "It was really important for us to be there that way," Cooper says, "to have the time to generate these ideas and to see the sights and smells and to have the dancers walk in the streets with the musicians and, you know, the rhythm of it there is so different."

The show that Stilwell and Cooper have developed marries Cuban historic and religious archetypes with West African-based sounds and dance. And of course, Cooper says, "We've incorporated a lot of extreme sensuality that is a part of their movement." *¡Bulla!* (pronounced "boo-ya" and meaning "to

make a racket or create a fuss") includes three Cuban dancers and three Cuban musicians; the show swirls the sound of batá drums within currents of swing, jazz and blues.

BRIGHTLY COSTUMED DANCERS represent deities from the island's various Catholic- and African spiritist-influenced religions, such as Babalu Ayé, a figure from the Santería faith. "He's sort of the same as St. Lazarus or Lazaro, the leper: the guy who is the keeper of the sickness," Cooper says. "Another one of these deities, her name is Oya, and she's the keeper of the cemeteries and of storms, and we thought, you know, in the jazz world, we have the New Orleans second line thing going on, and that second line originally came from the funeral parade, so who would be the best leader of the funeral parade? Oya. So we take that and then we twist it

together with a different feel and then the music becomes very interesting." A semicircle of musicians will be with the dancers on the stage, which has no wings, in imitation of those parts of Cuban cities where, as Cooper says, "if you look in a doorway, sometimes you just see into this sort of world that just sort of goes on forever, and there's alleys and courtyards. We also have these huge painted backdrops that look like those decaying walls that you see a lot in Cuba."

The Cuban musicians and dancers have only been in Canada since late February and rehearsals have been intense for a company that usually takes four months to get ready for a show. The experience is "terrifying, it's exhilarating, it's hilarious, it's depressing," laughs Cooper. "I feel like I'm traveling all the time, even though I'm right here."

And the thrilling, arduous ride is only beginning. DJD's performance of *¡Bulla!* in St. Albert kicks off a nationwide tour that climaxes in Ottawa, where this multicultural show will be part of Alberta Scene, a celebration of the province's arts in the nation's capital. ☐

¡BULLA!
A LOUD CUBAN JAZZ EXPERIMENT
Choreographed by Hannah Stilwell and Kimberley Cooper • Performed by Decidedly Jazz Danceworks • Arden Theatre (St. Albert) • Wed-Thu, Mar 30-31 • 459-1542

ARTS WEEKLY

Fax your free listings to 426-2889 or e-mail them to Glenys at lists@vuwweekly.com
Deadline is Friday at 3pm

DANCE

IBULLA! Arden Theatre, 5 St. Anne Street, St. Albert (459-1542/451-8000) • Decidedly Jazz Danceworks • Mar. 30-31 (8pm) • \$22.50 (adult)/\$18.50 (student) • Tickets available at Arden Theatre box office, TicketMaster

MIDNIGHT AT THE OASIS Myer Horowitz Theatre, SUB, U of A Campus (451-8000) • Mar. 26 (8pm) • \$15 (adult) • Tickets available at TicketMaster

RODA DE CAPOEIRA The Capoeira Academy, 10540 Jasper Ave (709-3500) • Every Sat (3-4pm) • Free performance of a Brazilian fusion of martial arts, dance, and music, invented by African slaves

GALLERIES/MUSEUMS

ALBERTA CRAFT COUNCIL GALLERY 10186-106 St (488-6611) • Open Mon-Sat 10am-5pm (closed all hols) • **ALL ABOUT ALBERTA: LAND, PEOPLE, HISTORY AND CULTURE**, until Apr. 2 • **Discovery Gallery: BODY ORNAMENT WEST**: Leading jewellery designs by Western Canadian artists; until Apr. 2

ART BEAT GALLERY 26 St. Anne Street, St. Albert (459-3679) • **BACKLASH BLUE AND OTHER HUES**: Oil paintings by Kari Duke • Until Apr. 16

ARTSHAB STUDIO GALLERY 3 Fl, 10217-106 St (439-9532/423-2966) • Open: Thu 5-8pm or by appointment • **BEYOND OLYMPIA**: Artworks of the female form • Until Mar. 31

CHRISTL BERGSTROM'S RED GALLERY 9621-82 Ave (439-8210) • **FLESH-BEYOND THE SURFACE**: Oil paintings by Christl Bergstrom • Until May 14

COLLECTIVE CONTEMPORARY ART AND DESIGN SHOP 6507-112 Ave (491-0002) • Open: Wed-Fri 12-6pm, Sat 10-6pm, Sun 12-4pm • Various artworks and objects • Until Apr. 1

DOWNTOWN ST. ALBERT Various locations downtown St. Albert (466-4310) • **QUILT WALK**: Presented by the St. Albert Quilters' Guild • Apr. 1-May 1

EDMONTON ART GALLERY 2 Sir Winston Churchill Sq (422-6223) • Open Tue-Wed and Fri 10:30am-5pm; Thu 10:30am-8pm; Sat, Sun 11am-5pm. Closed Mon • **FROM NEAR AND FAR**: Artworks that explore Canada as a multicultural society; until May 23 • **19TH CENTURY FRENCH REALIST MASTERWORKS FROM THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA**; until May 29 • **Realism in Art Lecture Series**: Protest, Violence and Reality on the Form: Millet and the French Peasant, lecture by Victor Chan, Thu, Mar. 31 (7pm); **Revolutionary Reverberations in French Realist Art**, lecture by Joan Greer, Thu, Apr. 7 (7pm) • **BETWEEN BORDERS**: Until June 19 • **REVEALING HIDDEN TREASURES**: Until Mar. 27 • **RE: BUILDING THE WORLD**: Artists' interpretation of architecture; until May 8 • **Architecture for Lunch**: The Garnier Opera and the Auditorium Building in Chicago; Thu, Mar. 31 • **Kitchen Gallery: OBSERVANCES: PAINTINGS OF SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS**: By David Janzen; until May 8 • \$9 (adult)/\$6 (student/senior)/\$3 (child 6-12)/free (member/child 5 and under)

ELECTRUM DESIGN STUDIO 12419 Stony Plain Rd (482-1402) • Open Tue by appt. only, Wed-Fri 10am-5:30pm, Sat 10am-4pm, closed long weekends • **COLLECTION 2005**: Rotating show of artists works

FAB GALLERY Room 1-1, Fine Arts Building, 112 St, 89 Ave, U of A Campus (492-2081) • Open Tue-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 2-5pm • **ENUNCIATED MURMURS**: Printworks by Tonia Bonnell; until Apr. 2; opening reception: Thu, Mar. 24 (7-10pm) • **THE ALCUIN AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN BOOK DESIGN IN CANADA, 2004**: Until Apr. 2

FORT DOOR 10308-81 Ave (432-7535) • Open: Mon-Wed, Sat 10am-6pm, Thu-Fri 10am-9pm, Sun 12-5pm • Open Mon-Wed, Sat 10-6, Thu, Fri 10-9, Sun 12-5 • Chukchi Siberian Eskimo scrimshaw, walrus tusk carvings by Telotyna. Canbou tufting by J. Wetasticut • Through March

FRINGE GALLERY Bsmt 10516 Whyte Ave (432-0240) • Open: Mon-Sat 9:30-6pm • **METAMORPHOSIS**. Featuring artists from Harcourt House Art Centre; until Mar. 31 • Artworks by Cynthia Gardiner; through April

FRONT GALLERY 12312 Jasper Ave (488-2952) • **DRAWING ON TEXT**: Figurative drawings by Doug Jamha • Until Mar. 30

GRANT MACEWAN CITY CENTRE CAMPUS 10700-104 Ave • Design works by graduates of Grant MacEwan's visual communication design program • Apr. 4-9

HARCOURT HOUSE 10215-112 St (426-4180) • Open Mon-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 12-4pm • **CHAIN MAKING**: Installation by Suzanne Cairnes; until Apr. 16 • **Front Room: GAME PLAN**: Paintings by Kim Sala; until Apr. 16

JASPER MUSEUM 400 Pyramid Lake Rd, Jasper (780-852-3013) • Open Thu-Sun 10am-5pm • **AN ARTIST'S JOURNEY**: Acrylic paintings by Enk Visser; until Apr. 3

JOHNSON GALLERY 7711-85 St (465-6171) • Open Mon-Fri 9am-5:30pm, Sat 10am-5pm • Artworks by Yardley Jones, Linda Nelson, Meta Ranger, Al Roberge, Andrew Besse, Jim Painter, Jack Ellis, George Tosczak. Pottery by Noburo Kubo • Through March

JOHNSON GALLERY 11817-80 St (479-8424) • Open Mon-Fri 9:30am-5:30pm; Sat 9:30am-4pm • Artworks by Glenda Beaver, Thelma Manary, Myles MacDonald, Myrna Wilkinson, Wendy Risdale, Jim Painter, and African masks • Through March

LANDO GALLERY 11130-105 Ave (990-1161) • Open: Mon-Fri 10am-5:30pm; Sat 10am-4:30pm • **INTRODUCTION**: Paintings by Orhan Coplu • **POETRY**: Paintings by Ruby Mah • **IMAGES**: Photographs by Richard Wear • Until Mar. 26

LATITUDE 53 10248-106 St (423-5353) • **FLOW-CHART**: Installation/video performance work by Tim Dallett • Until Mar. 26

McMULLEN GALLERY U of A Hospital, 8440-112 St (407-7152) • Open Mon-Fri 10am-8pm; Sat-Sun 1-8pm • **LIGHTNESS OF BEING**: Artworks by members of the Sculptors' Association of Alberta • Until May 1

MCPAG MULTICULTURAL PUBLIC ART GALLERY 5411-51 St, Stony Plain (963-2777) • Open: Mon-Sat 10am-4pm Sun 10am-6:30pm • Still life paintings by Robert Nichols and wall sculptures by Pierre Olberg; until Apr. 5 • **CONSIDER THE LILIES**: Paintings by Glenda Hope Lewis; Apr. 7-May 1; opening reception: Sun, Apr. 10 (1-3:30pm)

MULTICULTURAL HERITAGE CENTRE Dining Room Gallery, 5411-51 St, Stony Plain (963-2777) • Parkland photographs by Conny Schuster • Until Mar. 24

MUSÉE HÉRITAGE MUSEUM 5 St. Anne Street, St. Albert (459-1528) • Open Mon-Sat 10am-5pm; Sun 1-5pm • **SEAMS LIKE OLDE TIMES**: Heritage quilts from across Canada • Until Apr. 30

MUTTART CONSERVATORY 9626-96A St (496-2925) • **CLASSICAL GLIMPSES**: Display of spring flowering bulbs in the Show Pyramid • Until Apr. 3

NINA HAGGERTY CENTRE FOR THE ARTS Stollery Gallery, 9702-111 Ave (474-7611) • Open Mon-Fri 10am-2pm, Sat 10am-noon • **THE PATH OF PROMISE**: photographs by Jeffery Davis of the Tibetan Nuns exiled in India • Until Apr. 23 • Opening reception: Thu, Mar. 24 (4-8pm)

PROFILES PUBLIC ART GALLERY 19 Perron Street, St. Albert (460-4310) • Open Tue-Fri 12-5pm; Sat 2-6pm • **HIDDEN TALENTS V**: Artworks by students curated by Diane Gwilliam; until Apr. 1 • **THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT A FAT QUARTER**: Quilts from across Alberta presented by the St. Albert Quilters' Guild; Apr. 7-30; opening reception: Thu, Apr. 7 (7pm)

PROVINCIAL MUSEUM OF ALBERTA 12845-102 Ave (453-9100) • Open Mon-Sun 9am-5pm • **A CENTURY PAST: REFINED LIVING IN THE NEW ALBERTA**: Until Sept. 30 • **SYNCRUDE CANADA ABORIGINAL PEOPLES GALLERY**: Spans 11,000 years and 500 generations, people of the past and present, recordings, film, lights, artifacts and more. Permanent exhibit • **FACES OF SALT**: Until May 14 • **EDMONTON GRADS**: Until May 1 • **BACK HOME 2005**: Photography by Karen Brownlee; until Apr. 3 • **The Natural History Gallery**: • **BUG ROOM**: Live invertebrate display. Permanent exhibit • **THE BIRD GALLERY**: Mounted birds. Permanent exhibit • **TREASURES OF THE EARTH**: Geology collection. Permanent exhibit • **WILD ALBERTA GALLERY**: Permanent exhibit • **Wild Alberta** every weekend. Presentations start at 1pm and 2pm • Admission is half price Sat and Sun (9-11am) • **Terrace: BIG THINGS 3**: Large-scale sculpture; until Sept. 13 • **NORTH EDMONTON SCULPTURE WORKSHOP**: Ryan McCourt, Mark Bellows, Andrew French, Peter Hide, Ken Macklin and Royden Mills increase awareness and appreciation of local contemporary sculpture; until Mar. 29

ROWLES AND COMPANY GALLERY 10130-103 St (426-4035) • Open Mon-Fri 9am-5pm, Sat 12-5pm • Watercolours by Frances Alty-Arscott, Jeanne Findlay, Signe Behrens; oils by Audrey Pfannmuller, George Schwindt, Bruce Thompson; acrylics by Steve Mitts, Elaine Tweedy, Angela Grootelaar; sculpture by Rogelio Menz; blown glass by Darren Petersen, Susan Gottselig, Mark Gibeau • **Westin Hotel** (Lobby): Oils by Nel Kwiatkowski; (Pradera Room): Oils by Audrey Pfannmuller

SCOTT GALLERY 10411-124 St (488-3619) • Open Tue-Sat 10am-5pm • Group show of landscape and abstract paintings and metal sculptures by Gerald Faulder, Douglas Haynes, Leslie Poole, Katherine Sicotte and Arlene Wasylchuk; until Mar. 30 • **CHINATOWN TANGO, TOO**: Mixed media artworks by Dick Der • **BORDERLINE**: New paintings by Mananne Wachtel; Apr. 2-19; opening reception: Sat, Apr. 2 (2-4pm) artists in attendance

SNAP GALLERY 10309-97 St (423-1492) • Open Tue-Sat (12-5pm) • **SEARCHING FOR AGUA**: Printworks by Tomoyo Ihaya; Mar. 24-Apr. 30 • Artist lecture: Thu, Mar. 24 (7-8pm) • Opening reception: Thu, Mar. 24 (7-9pm) • Artist lecture and demonstration: Sat, Apr. 9 (1-4pm); free

STUDIO GALLERY 143 Grandin Park Plaza, St. Albert (460-5990) • **INTERPRETATIONS OF TEXTURE**: Artworks by gallery artists • Until Apr. 30

VAAA GALLERY 3rd Fl, Harcourt House, 10215-112 St (421-1731) • **JOURNEYS**: Featuring fibre art by Anna Hergert and watercolour landscapes by Willred Chiu • Until Apr. 16

VANDERLEELIE GALLERY 10183-112 St (452-0286) • Open: Tue-Sat 10am-5:30pm • Collagraphs by Jennifer Bowes, landscape paintings by Sara MacCulloch • Until Mar. 29

WORKS GALLERY Commerce Place, 10150 Jasper Ave (426-2122) • Open Mon-Fri noon-5pm, or by appointment • **CHICKENS**: Paintings by Peter Field • Until Apr. 1 • Closing reception: Apr. 1 (7-9pm)

LITERARY

NAKED CYBER CAFÉ 10354 Jasper Ave • Music, poetry, and performance art open stage hosted by the Naked Eclectic Electric Orchestra • Every Thu (8pm)

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA Room 122, Education South Bldg • Canadian Authors Association Writer's Circle featuring Rudy Wiebe • Mar. 25 (7pm, 8pm meeting)

LIVE COMEDY

THE COMEDY FACTORY 3414 Gateway Boulevard (469-4999) • Thu 8:30pm, Fri 8:30pm, Sat 8pm and 10:30pm • Wes Zaharak; Mar. 24-26 • Lamont Ferguson; Mar. 28, Apr. 1-2

THE COMIC STRIP 1646 Bourbon St, WEM, 8852-170 St (483-5999) • Show times nightly at 8pm; weekends 8pm and 10:30pm • Scott Hams and special guests; Mar. 24-27 (8pm nightly, and 10:30pm weekends) • Silly Sundays For Kids with Ron Pearson; Sun, Mar. 27 (12-1:45pm) • Get Hypnotized! with Sheldon Fingler; Tue, Mar. 29 (8pm) • Improv Extravaganza with Skit For Brains; Wed, Mar. 30 (8pm) • Mitch Fattel with Rick Bronson and Paul Brown; Mar. 31-Apr. 3 (8pm Sun-Thu; 8:30 and 10:30pm Fri; 8pm and 10:30pm Sat) • Silly Sundays for Kids with magic by Sheldon Casavant and Dan the Balloon Man; Apr. 2 (noon)

THE TAPHOUSE 9020 McKenny Ave, St. Albert (458-0860) • Sunny Knight, George Carlin (impersonator) • Sat, Mar. 26 (9:30pm) • \$5

WUNDERBAR HOFBRAUHAUS 8120 101 St (436-2286) • The Lederhoosers Super Comedy Dryhump • Every Fri (8:30pm) • Free

YUK YUK'S KOMEDY KABERET Londonderry Mar (481-9857) • BJ Woodbury; until Mar. 26 • Andy Dick in concert; Apr. 1-2

THEATRE

ARCHAIANS Theatre Lab, Grant MacEwan Centre for the Arts, 10045-155 St (497-4470) • Anstophanes' classic anti-war comedy about an Athenian man who sick of the endless war between Athens and Sparta, sends an envoy to the enemy to negotiate a separate peace for himself and his family • Apr. 6-10

THE BEAUX' STRATAGEM Timms Centre for the Arts 87 Ave, 112 St (420-1757) • Jim Defelice directs George Farquhar's classic 18th century comedy about a pair of cash-strapped London gentlemen who disguise themselves as a lord and his servant in order to trick a pair of wealthy women into marrying them • Mar. 31-Apr. 9 (8pm); preview: Mar. 30, \$5; mat: Apr. 7 (12:30pm), \$5; no show Apr. 3 • \$8-\$20 • Tickets available at the Studio Theatre box office one hour prior to performance, TIX on the Square

BEST OF FRIENDS Jubilations Dinner Theatre, 8882-170 St (484-2424) • A group of stylish twentysomethings cope with single life and unaffordable big-city lifestyles in this spoof of the TV series *Friends* • Until Apr. 3 (Wed-Sat 6:30pm door, Sun 5pm)

THE CRIPPLE OF INISHMAAN Walderdale Theatre, 10322-83 Ave (439-2845/420-1757) • Keri Ekberg directs Martin McDonagh's black comedy about a young Irish outcast who becomes the talk of the village when he decides to cross the sea to a neighbouring island and audition for a visiting Hollywood director who's filming a documentary there • Mar. 30-Apr. 9 • \$12 (adults)/\$10 (student/senior); Fri-Sat: \$14 (adult)/\$12 (student/senior) • Tickets available at TIX On The Square

DIE-NASTY! Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (433-3399) • An all-star cast of the city's top comic actors travel back to the Middle Ages—a time when love was courtly, desire was sinful and personal hygiene was suspect at best—for the 14th season of Edmonton's only live, improvised soap opera • Every Mon (8pm) until May 30 • \$10 (door)

LOVE ACCORDING TO JOHN Eva O. Howard Theatre, Victoria School (455-0787) • Presented by the Alberta Lync Theatre • Mar. 25-27

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING Catalyst Theatre, 8529-103 St (433-4999/420-1757) • Brent Jans directs Dave Stone, Nicole Moeller, Andrew McCreedy and Morgan Smith in William Shakespeare's classic comedy/drama about two pairs of lovers, one of which is brought together as a result of a mischievous prank, and another whose relationship is nearly destroyed by a malevolent lie • Until Mar. 27; Thu-Sat (8pm), Pay-What-You-Can: Sun, Mar. 27 (2pm) • \$14 (adult)/\$12 (student/senior) • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

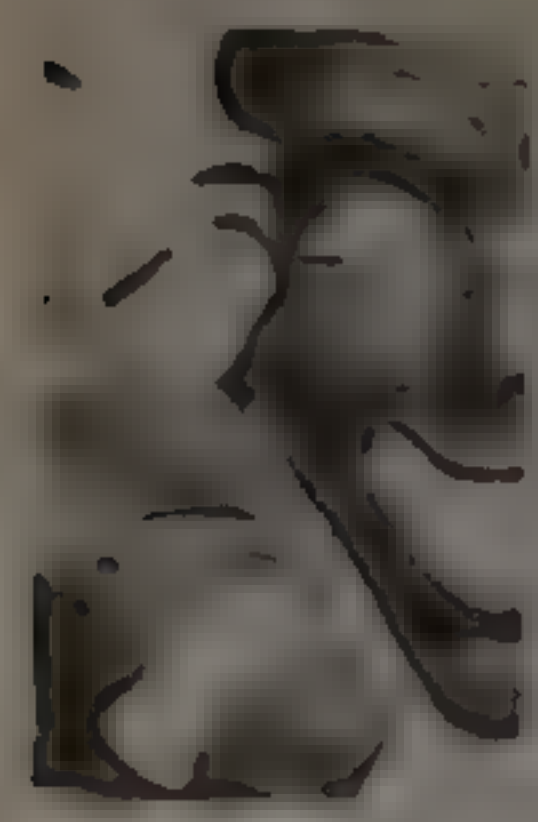
OH SUSANNA! Varscona Theatre 10329-83 Ave (433-3399) • Edmonton's live, Euro-style talk show, featuring music, games, comedy and celebrity interviews all presided over by international glamour-gal Susanna Patchouli and her co-host, Eros, God of Love • Sat, Mar. 26 (11pm) • Tickets available at the box office

SEE HOW THEY RUN Mayfield Dinner Theatre, Mayfield Inn, 16615-109 Ave (483-4051) • Philip King's old-fashioned British farce about an American actress, an English vicar, an American soldier, a dirty maid, a Russian spy, a confused bishop and a hopeless tangle of mistaken identities • Until Apr. 10 • \$52-\$82

SUMMER OF MY AMAZING LUCK The Roxy, 10708-124 St (453-2440) • Bradley Moss directs Beth Graham, Chris Craddock and Caroline Livingstone in Chris Craddock's adaptation of Minam Toews's novel, a pointed comedy about a welfare mom who embarks on a road trip to Colorado in search of the free-eating busker who fathered her children • Apr. 5-24 (Tue-Sat 8pm, Sun 2pm) • \$21/\$17; Fri-Sat: \$22/\$18; Two-For-One: Tue, Apr. 12

THE UNLIKELY BIRTH OF ISTVAN 8529 Gateway Boulevard (431-1750/420-1757) • Calgary's Old Trout Puppet Workshop performs this unique "visual poem" in which a cast of puppets and marionettes presents a grand unified theory of the meaning of birth, death and every human phenomenon in between • Mar. 30-Apr. 3 • \$21 (adult)/\$16 (student/senior) • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

VANYA Citadel Theatre, Main Stage, 9828-101A Ave (425-1820) • Bob Baker directs Tom Wood in Wood's new adaptation of *Uncle Vanya*, which transposes Anton Chekhov's classic drama about love, disillusionment and the gulf that separates the rural world from the sophisticated life of the city to northern Alberta in 1928 • Until Apr. 10 • Tickets available at the Citadel box office



theatre notes

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

Nothing comes of Nothing

Much Ado About Nothing • Catalyst Theatre • To Mar 27 • reVUE For Sound and Fury's new production of *Much Ado About Nothing*, director Brent Jans has somehow whittled Shakespeare's text down to a brisk 90 minutes. Jans and company hurry past all of the play's deepest moments of comedy and of sadness, and by the time it's all over, you feel like you've speed-read the play instead of fully experiencing it.

Dave Stone has a self-confident charm that makes him a good choice to play Benedick, and his willingness to make himself look silly works well in the scenes where Benedick is tricked into believing that Beatrice (who he's been trading insults with throughout the entire play) secretly loves him.

Unfortunately, Nicole Moeller, who plays Beatrice, is a less than ideal partner for him. The severe expression she maintains on her face is a strange acting choice, especially when Beatrice so obviously enjoys matching wits with this guy. And Stone and Moeller race through their lines so quickly that they come off sounding more like well-rehearsed actors reciting carefully memorized barbs than two characters cleverly improvising their way through a very public game of one-upmanship—and what's more, really getting off on it.

There are 10 people in the cast, but they never quite gel into a true ensemble. Morgan Smith, who plays Hero, has a nice scene when her fiancé Claudio cruel-

ly rejects her at the altar, and Andrew Mcready uses his well-honed sense of stage timing to good effect, setting his own strong comic rhythm in his scenes as Dogberry. But most of the performances are more problematic; Paul Wallace is a particular disappointment as Don John, a seethingly cruel and misanthropic villain who here just seems bored and pissy.

One thing that did occur to me while watching this play was that it might be interesting to see a play focussing on Don John and Dogberry—these two men whose wartime experiences seem to have driven them both insane, albeit in different ways. Maybe that's a foolish idea, but I think it'd be better than *Nothing*.

The big two-Oh!

It's not news that another episode of *Oh Susanna!* will be taking place at the Varscona Theatre this Saturday (March 26); Susanna Patchouli and her capacious bosom preside over Edmonton's live Euro-style talk show the last Saturday

of every month. What *is* news is that a rare gap in the Varscona schedule has allowed Ms. Patchouli and her co-host Eros to stage two shows this month, a prime-time edition at 8 p.m. and a second episode in her usual 11 p.m. slot.

The early performance—which will raise funds for Teatro la Quindicina's impending production of Stewart Lemoine's *Pith!* in New York—has a higher-than-usual \$20 admission fee, but you'll be getting more for your money as well: in addition to the usual carnival of music, celebrity interviews and high-spirited competitions, there'll be a performance of Lemoine's little-seen 1999 short play *Love Litigants* and a post-show Thai banquet courtesy of the King and I. (Your prime-time stub will also get you into the late-night show for half-price.)

Life is Short

He wasn't, strictly speaking, a theatre performer, but **Bobby Short** was such a peerless interpreter of classic show tunes

that I would feel remiss if I didn't make some small mention here of his death last Monday, from leukemia. He was 80.

If you've seen *Hannah and Her Sisters*, you've seen Short at his best: when Woody Allen and Dianne Wiest go on their first date together, he's the guy sitting at the piano, belting out Cole Porter's "I'm in Love Again" in that uniquely joyful voice of his, the phlegm at the back of his throat giving a slight rumble to every syllable.

I had the great pleasure of seeing Short perform live in New York a few years ago at his regular haunt, the Café Carlyle, and I even got to shake his hand after he finished his impeccable set. I still remember how gracious he was when I told him how far I'd traveled to see him; he was about 75, but he wore an expression of such bright-eyed delight that he seemed half that age. He was one of the last links to a more sophisticated era of show business than the one we know now, and he'll be deeply missed. ☹

EVENTS WEEKLY

Fax your free listings to 426-2889 or e-mail them to Glenys at listings@vuwweekly.com
Deadline is Friday at 3pm

CLUBS/LECTURES

BEHIND THE SCENES Valley Zoo (496-2925) • Informative presentation and lecture on the cat family at Valley Zoo • Thu, Mar. 24 (6:30-8pm) • \$17 (adult) pre-register

BOREAL ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM 7, 63284-104 St; every Thu (6:30-8:30) • Organic Roots, 8225-122 St • Every third Thu (6:30pm)

A CITY OF WOMEN WRITERS: THE BATH OF JANE AUSTEN AND PERSUASION Edmonton Rm, Stanley A. Milner Library, Sir Winston Churchill Sq (465-3130) • Dr. Isabel Grundy speaks about her discovery of a thriving community of women writers in Bath • Sat, Mar. 26 (2-4pm) • Free

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX PROGRAM TBW2, Tory Building, U of A Campus • The U of A Accounting Club with prepare tax returns for people with low income • Until Apr. 1 (Mon-Fri) • Free

EATING Dow Centennial Centre, 8700-84 St, Fort Saskatchewan • A screening of the video *Eating* and lecture by Laune Dunford • Tue, Mar. 29 (7pm) • Free

EDMONTON'S PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT • **Victory Christian Centre**, 11520-Ellerslie Rd (496-6120) Public meeting to discuss proposed amendment to the Rutherford Neighbourhood Area Structure Plan and Zoning Bylaw, Ward 5 • Thu, Mar. 24 (7pm)

FOREIGN QUALIFICATIONS—DO THEY MATTER? SpruceWoods Library, 95 St & 116 Ave (995-6819/435-0096) • Lecture by Ronnie Hoy • Mar. 30 (7-9 p.m.) • Free

THE HUMAN FINGERPRINT Rm 2-117, CSB, U of A Campus (492-6408) • Featuring *The Great Warming* documentary, co-ordinated by Dr Soskolne • Wed, Apr. 6 (noon-12:50pm)

IS EDMONTON GROWING SMART? SUB Stage, U of A Campus • Video presentation by the Sierra Club of Edmonton • Thu, Mar. 31 (7:30pm) • Free

THE ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT Rm 2-115 Education North, U of A Campus • Presentation of possible solutions with Gush Shalom member Teddy Katz • Mon, Mar. 28 (7-9pm) • Free (donations appreciated)

ROMANESQUE AND MODERN VIOLET ARTIST IT57 Stanley A. Milner Library (Main Floor, SW Corner (492-0448) • Philosophers' Cafe featuring speaker Karyn Bail • Sat, Apr. 2 (2-3:30pm)

LIVING POSITIVE www.edmlivingpositive.ca (1-877-975-9448/488-5768) • Edmonton Persons Living with HIV Society • Every Tue (7pm): Peer-facilitated support groups • Daily drop-in, peer counselling

MEDITATION • **Garneau United Place**, 11148-84 Ave (412-1006) Drop-in meditation with Gen Kelsang Phuntsoq; every Thu (7-9pm); \$10 (donation) • **Diamond Way Buddhist Centre**, 4th Fl, 10314 Whyte Ave (455-5488) free meditations every Wed (8pm) • **City Arts Centre**, 10943-84 Ave; The Way of Life meditation, last Tue each month (7pm door) • **Transmission Meditation**, Stillpoint Healing Centre, 10350-124 St (433-3342) every Tue, Thu, Sun (8-9:30pm); free • **Riverlodge Retreat Centre**, Devon (412-1006); Lead by Buddhist Monk and Gen Kelsang Phuntsoq, Mar. 25-27

TOASTMASTERS • **St. Paul's Church**, 4005-115 Ave (476-6963) • Learn public speaking; every Thu (7-9pm) • **Baker Centre**, 10th Fl, 10025-106 St (477-2613) Upward Bound Toastmasters; every Wed (7pm) • **Norwood Legion**, 11150-82 St (456-3934) Norwood Toastmasters

Club Weekly meeting about public speaking, and how to improve your communication and leadership skills; every Thu (8-10pm) • **Central Lions**, 11113-113 St (405-6408/489-83) Enthusiastic Seniors Toastmasters meetings first and third Tue every month (1:30pm)

UNDER THE NORTHERN LIGHT: THE BOREAL FOREST V Wing Lecture Theatres, Rm 120, U of A Campus (492-5825) • Lecture on the strategic vision of the future of remote sensing and geographic information systems in the context of sustainable forest management, by Dr. Arturo Sanchez-Azofeifa; Thu, Mar. 24 (4:30pm)

WHAT'S NEW FOR 2005 Devonian Botanic Garden, 5km N of Devon on Hwy 60 (987-2064) • Slide lecture (7-8:30pm)

QUEER LISTINGS

AGAPE Faculty of Education, U of A Campus • Sex, sexual, gender differences in education and culture focus group • Contact Dr. Andre Grace (andre.grace@ualberta.ca) for info

AXIOS (454-8449) • A support group, local chapter of the international organization of Eastern Orthodox and Eastern Rite Catholic Gay and Lesbian Christians

BISexual WOMEN'S COFFEE GROUP bwcoffeegroup@yahoo.ca • Social group for bi-curious and bi-sexual women • Second Thu ea month (7:30pm)

BOOTS AND SADDLES 10242-106 St (423-5014) • Large tavern with pool tables, restaurant, shows. Members only

BUDDY'S NITE CLUB 11725 Jasper Ave (488-6636) • Open daily 9-3, Fri 8pm • Mon: Amateur strip (12:30); DJ Alvaro, Ashley Love • Tue: retro, top 40 with DJ Arrowchaser, male-box night, free pool • Wed: DJ Eddy Toonflash; Drag shows (12:30) • Thu: Wet undies contest (12:30) w/Connie Lingua and DJ Squiggles • Fri: Dance party with DJ Alvaro • Sat: DJ Arrowchaser, pool tournament • Sexy Sundays with DJ Eddy Toonflash, all request dance party

DIGNITY EDMONTON (482-6845) • Support community for lesbian Catholics and friends

DOWN UNDER 12224 Jasper Ave (482-7960) • Steam bath

EDMONTON RAINBOW BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (422-6207) • An organization for gay men and lesbians in business and their non-gay friends to share business knowledge, learn, make friends and network in a positive, proud space where being yourself is the norm

FREE-TO-BE-VOLLEYBALL Oliver School Gym, SE Entrance, 10227-118 St (444-5673) • Mixed recreational volleyball league catering to the GLBT • Wed (7:30-9:30pm) (Sept.-May) • \$3 (drop-in)/\$20 (term)/\$40 (year)

GAY MEN'S OUTREACH CREW (GMOG) 45, 9912-106 St (488-0564) • Peer education initiative for gay/bisexual men that works toward preventing the spread of HIV by improving self-esteem

HIV NETWORK OF EDMONTON SOCIETY 105, 10550-102 St (488-5742) • Programs and support services for people affected and infected by HIV/AIDS and related illnesses. Counselling, referrals, support groups, harm reduction, education, advocacy and public awareness campaigns

ICARE 702A, 10242-105 St (448-1768) • www.icarealberta.org • The Interfaith Centre for AIDS/HIV Resources and Education (formerly Interfaith Association on AIDS) provides spiritual support and connections for those affected by HIV/AIDS

ILLUSIONS SOCIAL CLUB GLCCE, Suite 45, 9912-106 St • Meetings every second Thursday each month

INSIDE/OUT U of A Campus • Campus-based organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) faculty, graduate student, academic, straight allies

and support staff • Third Thu each month (fall/winter terms): Speakers Series. Contact Kns (kwell@ualberta.ca) or Marjorie (mwonham@ualberta.ca) for schedule

LAMBDA CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY CHURCH Garneau United Church, 11148-84 Ave (474-0753) • Every Sun (7pm): Worship services. Serving the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered community

LUTHERANS CONCERNED www.lcna.org (426-0905) • A spiritual community which gathers monthly for sharing, friendship, individual support and a safe space for our own spiritual questions

MADELEINE SANAM FOUNDATION Faculté St. Jean, 8406 Marie-Anne Gaboury (91 St) Rm 3-18 (490-7332) • Program for HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and harm reduction in French, English and other African languages • Every 3rd and 4th Sat (9am-5pm) • Free (member)/\$10 (membership) • Pre-register

MAKING WAVES SWIMMING CLUB www.geocities.com/makingwaves_edm • Recreational and competitive swimming with coaching, beginners encouraged to participate. Socializing after practices • Every Tue and Thu

MEN TALKING WITH PRIDE (488-3234) • Every Sun (7pm): A safe, supportive, confidential discussion group talking about all gay related issues, for men at any stage of coming out • Free • talkingwithpride@hotmail.com

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF EDMONTON (429-2321) • Weekly non-denominational church services

PFLAG GLCCE, Suite 45, 9912-106 St (462-5958) • Meetings every third Tuesday of the month at 7:30pm • Support/education for parents, families and friends of lesbians/gays/bisexuals/transgenders

POLICE LIAISON COMMITTEE (421-2277/1-877-882-2011, ext. 2038) • Edmonton Police Service and the gay and lesbian community

PRIME TIMERS (426-7019) • Meetings every second Sunday of the month at 3pm. A social group for gay/bisexual men over 40 and their friends

PRISM BAR AND GRILL 10524-101 St, back entrance (990-0038) • Lesbian and gay bar/restaurant

THE ROOST 10345-104 St (426-3150) • Open Sun-Thu 8pm-3am, Fri-Sat 8pm-4am • Wed: Amateur strip with Weena Luv, Sticky Vicky, DJ Alvaro • Thu: Rotating shows. Sticky's open stage and the Weakest Link game second and last Thursday with DJ Jazzy • Fri: **Upstairs:** Euro Blitz: New European music with DJ OuttaWak **Downstairs:** DJ Jazzy • Sat: Every Sat like new years: **Upstairs:** Monthly theme parties with DJ Jazzy **Downstairs:** New music with DJ Dan and Mike • Sun: Betty Ford Hangover Clinic Show: Every long weekend with DJ Jazzy • Tue-Thu \$1 (member)/\$4 (non-member); Fri-Sat \$4 (member)/\$6 (non-member); Sun \$2

STEAMWORKS 11745 Jasper Ave (451-5554) • Steam baths open daily (24hrs)

TRANSSEXUAL/TRANSGENDER SUPPORT GROUP egret@hotmail.com • Meetings every fourth Tuesday of the month • Information and mutual support for transgendered people in an open, friendly and safe environment. Open to transsexuals, transvestites, cross-dressers, drag queens/lings

WOODY'S 11723 Jasper Ave (488-6557) • Open Daily (noon) • Sat-Wed: Karaoke with Annie and Tizzy (7-12pm) • Tue, Sat-Sun: Pool tournaments

YOUTH UNDERSTANDING YOUTH 45, 9912-106 St • www.members.shaw.ca/yuy • Every Sat (7-9pm) • An adult facilitated social/support group for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, and straight youth under the age of 25

SPECIAL EVENTS

THE AMAZING JOHN X'C SHOW Red Strap Market, 10305-97 St (497-2211) • Tightrope walking and tuba music • Sat, Apr. 2 (2-4pm) • Free

ANARCHIST BOOK FAIR Queen Alexandra Hall, 10425 University Ave • Featuring hard-to-find literature and alternative media with local labour, public interest, envi-

ronmental, and non-profit groups with Boiling Frog, a showing of *Mordi Gros: Made in China* Fri (6pm), and speaker Allan Antliff Sat (8pm) • Mar. 25-27 (Friday 6-10, Saturday 10-10 and Sunday 10-5pm) • Free

BENEFIT FOR SRI LANKAN ELEPHANTS Valley Zoo, Salto Centre, 13315 Buena Vista Rd (496-1617) • Slide show and discussion, silent auction of paintings by elephants • Mar. 24 (7-10pm) • \$10 (door)

BODY AND SOUL AND SPIRIT EXPO Shaw Conference Centre, 9797 Jasper Ave (1-877-560-6830) • Featuring exhibits, lectures, alternative therapies, yoga, astrology and psychics • Apr. 1-3

BRUNCH WITH THE BISHOPS Foundation of Newman Theological College, St. Joseph Seminary, 15611 St. Albert Trail (447-2993) • Mass with Archbishop Thomas Collins and Emeritus Joseph MacNeil • Sun, Apr. 3 (9:30am mass/10:30am brunch) • \$15

CYBERNAUGHTYKA Red Strap Art Market, 10305-97 St • Cabaret of experimental music, art, and fashion; a fundraiser for HIV Edmonton featuring Agape Ray Gun, Marc Ladouceur and Bob Jahrig, Laura Singh, Dead City Serpents, Middle Aged Crazies, Babe Lloyd and the Wheel of Meat, Bill Carley, Amazing John, and more • Fri, Apr. 1 (7pm door, 8pm show) • \$10 (door)

DINNER AND ANTIQUES Multicultural Heritage Centre, Stony Plain (963-2777) • Dinner, musical entertainment and antiques and collectibles with Dawn and Bill • Fri, Apr. 1 (6:30pm cocktails, 7pm dinner)

LET THEM EAT CAKE Third Space, 11516-103 St (420-1757) • Fundraiser presented by Northern Light Theatre • Mar. 26 (8pm) • \$25 • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

A NIGHT OF PRAIRIE FAILURES IN BURLESQUE Chez Pierre, 10040-105 St (429-9626) • *The Three Sisters: A Black Opera In 3 Acts*, fundraiser featuring theatre, dance, music and visual artists, presented by Cowgild Opera Theatre • Mar. 27 (8pm) • \$12 (no minors)

TRAVELLERS AND MAGICIANS Garneau Theatre, 8712-109 St (433-0726) • Movie premiere event presented by the Gaden Samten Ling Tibetan Buddhist Meditation Society • Mar. 24 (7pm)

USUKU YA UTAMADUNI WA AFRIKA International Centre, 172 Hub Mall, U of A Campus (433-3533) • Food, fashion, music and dance from Africa presented by the students of Swahili 112 • Thu, Mar. 31 (7:30-9:30pm) • Free

THE WAY OF THE CROSS King's University College Gym, 9125-50 St (438-9516/465-8306) • Drama, art, music and dance presented by the Polestar Players Society • Mar. 24-25 (7pm); Mar. 26 (2:30pm) • \$12 (adult)/\$10 (senior/student)/\$6 (child under 12) • Tickets available at Blessings, Revelations, Inspirations, TKUC Bookstore

KARAOKE

AVENUE PIZZA 8519-112 St (432-0536) • Every Thu (9:30pm)

B-STREET 11818-111 Ave (414-0545) • Every Wed-Sun (9pm): with Brad Scott

BANKER'S PUB 16753-100 St (406-5440) • Every Fri-Sat (9pm-1am): Off-Key Entertainment with Keri

BILLY BOB'S Continental Inn, 16625 Stony Plain Rd (484-7751) • Every Thu/Fri/Sat (9:30pm): with Escapade Entertainment

BILLY BUDD'S 9839-63 Ave (438-1148) • Every Sat (9:30pm)

BLUE QUILL 326 Saddleback Rd (434-3124) • Every Fri/Sat (10pm)

BORDERLINE PUB 3226-82 St (462-1888) • Every Thu-Sat (9:30pm)

BUD'S LOUNGE St. Albert (458-3826) • Every Fri-Sat (9:30pm-1:30am)

CAMELOT SPORTS BAR 10231-95 St (425-4298) • Every Sun (8pm): Hosted by Jeannie

CEILI'S IRISH PUB 10338-109 St (426-5555) • Jameek • Every Sat (9pm)

CLAREVIEW PUB Victoria Trail, 132 Ave (414-1111) • Every Tue (9:30pm-2am)

CLIFF CLAYVIN'S 9710-105 St (424-1614) • Every Fri/Sat (10pm)

DOYLE'S PUB 2619-151 Ave (473-1961) • Every Fri/Sat (9:30pm): with Stone Rock

DUSTER'S PUB 6402-118 Ave (474-5554) • Karaoke every Wed

FIRST CITY SPORTS LOUNGE 10136-100 St (428-3399) • Every Sun (10pm) with Mr. Entertainment

FRANCO'S 14059 Victoria Trail (478-4636) • Every Thu Sat (9pm): with Debra-Fae

FUNKY BUDDHA 10341-82 Ave (433-9676) • Every Sun (9:30pm): with Scott

GAS PUMP 10166-114 St (488-4841) • Every Tue/Wed (9pm)

HILLVIEW PUB 311 Woodvale Rd. W, Millwoods (414-0468) • Every Fri/Sat (9:30-1am)

JIMMY RAY'S 15211-111 Ave (486-3390) • Every Fri/Sat (8:30pm): Name that tune

KELLY'S 11540 Jasper Ave (451-8825) • Every Sun/Wed

KINGSKNIGHT PUB 9221-34 Ave (433-2599) • Greet Bastard Thursdays

L.B.'S 23 Akins Dr, St. Albert (460-9100) • Every Tue/T (9pm)

LEGENDS PUB 6104 172 St • Karaoke every Thu

MARK'S BACK PUB 13403 Fort Rd (406-5152) • Every Fri/Sat (9pm): with Peggy Sue

MICHAEL'S 11730 Jasper Ave (482-4767) • Every Mon with Scott

ORLANDO'S I 15163-121 St (457-1195) • Every Wed Thu (9pm-2am): Off-Key Entertainment with Nicole

ORLANDO'S II 13509-127 St (451-7799) • Every Tue/Wed (9pm)

OVERLAND RESTAURANT 12960 St. Albert Tr (454-0667) • Every Fri/Sat (9pm): Off-Key Entertainment with Connie

PEPPERS Westmount Centre, St. Albert Trail, 111 Ave (451-8022) • Every Thu

RATT U of A Campus (492-2048) • Karaoke Wednesdays with Kriegs from Stone Rock Productions

RATTLESNAKE SALOON (438-8878) • Karaoke Carral Tue-Sat hosted by Mr. Entertainment

ROSARIO'S PUB 11715-108 Ave (447-4727) • Daily (9pm)

ROSEBOWL PIZZA 10111-117 St (482-5152) • Every Wed/Sat (9pm)

ROSIE'S BAR AND GRILL • **Downtown**, 10604-101 St (423-3499); **Mon-Sat** (9pm); **Sun** (7pm): with Ruth • **Highstreet**, 10315-124 St (482-1600); **daily** (9:30pm) • **Old Strathcona**, 10475-80 Ave (439-7211); **Thu/Fri/Sat** (9:30pm-1:30am)

STRATHEARN PUB 9514-87 St (465-5478) • Every Wed/Fri (9pm)

TODAY'S 5224-86 St (465-6223) • Every Fri/Sat (9pm-1am)

WINSTONS PUB 9016-132 Ave (457-4883) • Every Wed/Fri/Sat (9:30m-1am)

WOODY'S 11723 Jasper Ave (488-6557) • Open Daily (noon) • Sat-Wed: Karaoke with Annie and Tizzy (7pm-midnight)

YESTERDAY'S 205 Carnegie Dr, St. Albert (459-0293) • Every Wed (9pm-1am): Off-Key Entertainment with Nicole

ZOCCA'S PUB 10807 Castledowns Rd (473-6339) • Every Sun (9pm-1am): Off-Key Entertainment with Nicole

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Call to Enter ArtsHab Studio Gallery features guest artists. Incl: Proposal (w/physical description, special requirements); 10 slides/photos; CV; Artist statement. Info ph Tim 423-2966.

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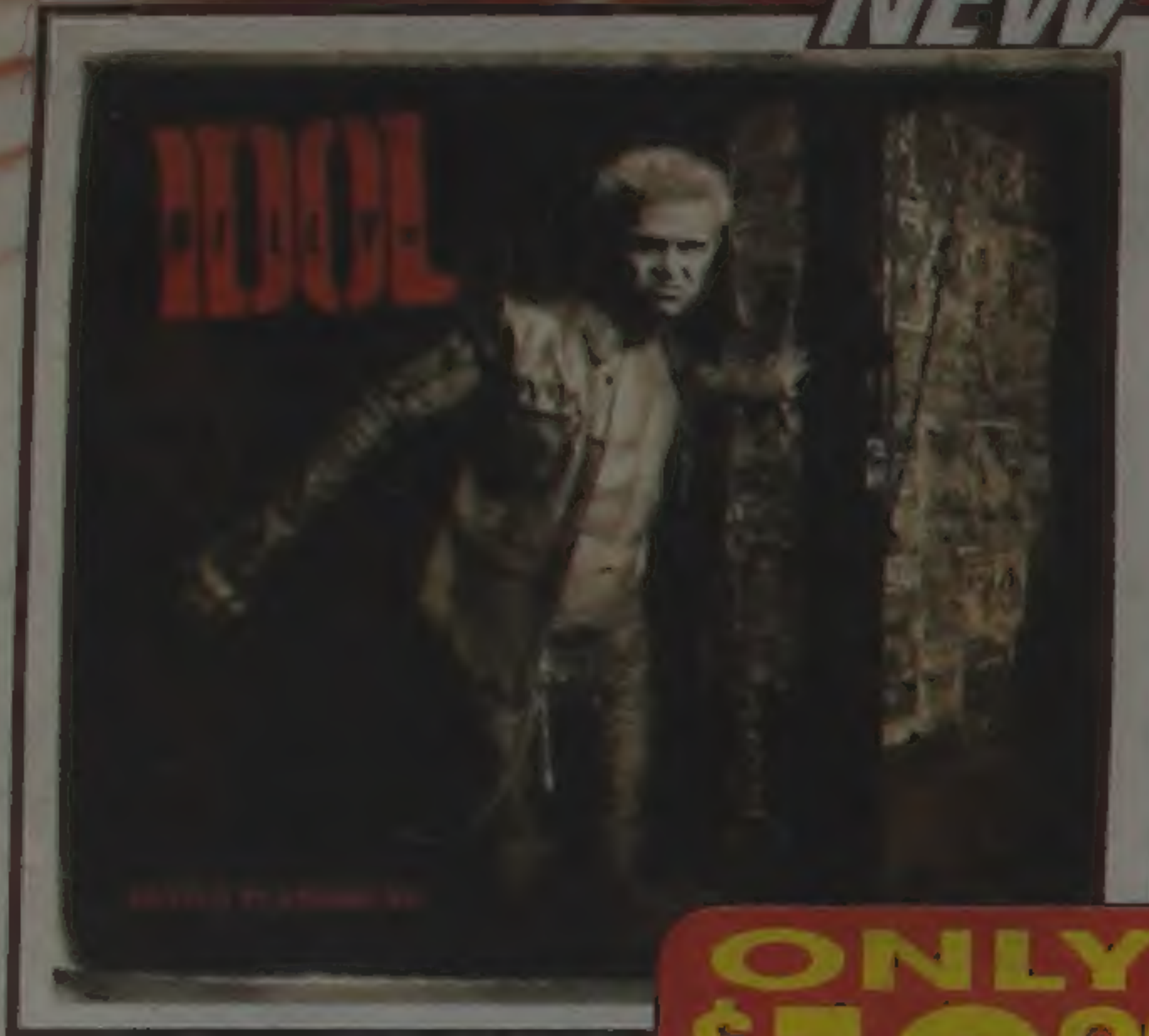
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